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## ARTISTIC IDEALS<sup>1</sup> V. UNIVERSALITY

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"The soul of man is a strange mixture of God and brute, a battleground of two natures, the one particular, finite, self-centered, the other universal, infinite, and impartial. . . . The infinite part of our life does not see the world from one point of view; it shines impartially, like the diffused light on a cloudy sea. . . . Its impartiality leads to truth in thought, justice in action, and universal love in feeling."—*Bertrand Russell*.

### I

THE distinction we have drawn between pseudo- and genuine originality—the one self-regarding, the other beauty-regarding, the one exclusive, the other widely inclusive—needs only to be carried somewhat further to broaden into the still more fundamental and important distinction between partiality and impartiality, between self-interest and disinterestedness, between the narrow view of the practical man and the wide universal vision of æsthetic genius. This broadening is suggested by Buermeyer in the statement, already quoted, that "the expression of an artist's total self is the same thing as the interpretation of an object in all its relationships." He amplifies his thought in this later passage: "It is because as intelligence and general culture rise to higher levels objectivity increases too, that we say that the greatest artist is the most impersonal artist. Of course, he is also the most personal. But his personality has passed into his world, and he shows himself in showing it."<sup>2</sup> Or,

<sup>1</sup>These papers on "Artistic Ideals" the author has based on excerpts from his reading which he has found inspiring, in the hope of thus sharing their stimulus with other artists.

<sup>2</sup>L. Buermeyer: "The Æsthetic Experience," page 179.

as a writer on music, Mr. Henry J. Watt, puts the same thing: "When a man makes a work of art, he makes an object that expresses itself as independently of him thereafter as his own son ever could. . . . The greatest artist, in his greatest moments, seems not to mould and to form his works, but merely to yield himself to the impulses of artistic force. He is not so much a maker as a discoverer of beauty, however much he may have to grope and to search before he finds the true beauty. . . . His sole task is to find the true beauty and to recognize it then." "The artist," insisted Flaubert in a letter to George Sand, "should not appear in his work any more than God does in nature. The man is nothing, the work is everything."

The impersonal view of the world and of their art instinctively taken by all supreme artists is by no means a matter of chance, but a rigorous psychological necessity. Everyday experience shows us that preoccupation with personal interests makes impossible that devotion to universal interests which we quaintly call "disinterestedness." Egotism and universality will not mix. This truth has been recognized and proclaimed by the best minds of our time, however emancipated from the conventional religious ideas in terms of which such truths used to be couched, with a force all the greater for this unconventional expression. In his "Man and Superman" Shaw describes what he calls "the true joy of life" as "the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap-heap; the being a force of nature, instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."

Galsworthy believes that "Happiness lies in breadth of heart" and says that "Art is ever unifying human life, through the common factor of impersonal emotion passing from heart to heart."<sup>1</sup> And H. G. Wells writes: "I see myself in life as part of a great physical being that strains and I believe grows toward beauty, and of a great mental being that strains and I believe grows toward knowledge and power. In this persuasion that I am a gatherer of experience, a mere tentacle that arranges thought beside thought for this Being of the Species, this Being that grows beautiful and powerful, in this persuasion I find the ruling idea of which I stand in need, the ruling idea that reconciles and adjudicates among my warring motives. In it I find both concentration of myself and escape from myself, in a word, I find *Salvation*."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John Galsworthy : "A Sheaf," pages 271-275.

<sup>2</sup>H. G. Wells : "First and Last Things."

Others have spoken more particularly of thought, showing how philosophic truth is essentially universal, and how personal preoccupations shut it out, or shut us off from it. "All acquisition of knowledge" points out Bertrand Russell, "is an enlargement of the self, but this enlargement is best attained when it is not directly sought. . . . It is not obtained when, taking the self as it is, we try to show that the world is so similar to this self that knowledge of it is possible without any admission of what seems alien. The desire to prove this is a form of self-assertion, and like all self-assertion, it is an obstacle to the growth of self which it desires, and of which the self knows that it is capable. Self-assertion, in philosophic speculation as elsewhere, views the world as a means to its own ends; thus it makes the world of less account than self, and the self sets bounds to the greatness of its goods. In contemplation, on the contrary, we start from the not-self and through its greatness the bounds of self are enlarged; through the infinity of the universe the mind which contemplates it achieves some share of infinity."<sup>1</sup> In the same way Santayana reminds us that "the best things that come into a man's consciousness are the things that take him out of it—the rational things that are independent of his personal perception and of his personal existence. These he approaches with his reason, and they, in the same measure, endow him with their immortality."<sup>2</sup>

## II

It was on this contrast between the merely personal and the universal that Schopenhauer based his well-known theory of genius. According to him, since our primary approach to the world is through what he calls the Will—that is, through those personal desires and passions which he considers by nature insatiable—we are foredoomed to endless frustration: this is Schopenhauer's pessimism. But in the service of the will, he says, grows up another faculty, our intelligence, in which we are free and impersonal (or superpersonal), and which is able under favorable conditions and to some extent, emancipating itself from the will, to perceive the world as it is in itself, or as "Idea," that is, in its permanent objectivity. In the exercise of pure intelligence alone are we masterful, in all action directed to personal ends we are slaves: or, as he states it in the magnificent opening of his essay on Genius: "No difference of rank, position, or birth, is so great

<sup>1</sup>Bertrand Russell: "The Problems of Philosophy," pages 245-246.

<sup>2</sup>G. Santayana: "Studies in Poetry and Religion," p. 214.

as the gulf that separates the countless millions who use their head only in the service of their belly, in other words look upon it as an instrument of the will, and those very few and rare persons who have the courage to say: No, it is too good for that; my head shall be active only in its own service; it shall try to comprehend the wondrous and varied spectacle of this world. These are the truly noble, the real *noblesse* of the world. The others are serfs."

Now genius, according to Schopenhauer, is simply a superfluity of this power of pure perception, or universality of view, a superfluity that, detaching itself from its original servitude to the will, may become to some degree an end in itself. "Always to see the universal in the particular," he says, "is the fundamental character of genius, while the normal man knows in the particular only the particular as such, for only as such does it belong to the actual, which alone has interest for him, that is, relations to his will."<sup>1</sup> And again: "The salient point of every beautiful work, of every great or profound thought, is a purely objective perception. Such perception is absolutely conditioned by the complete silence of the will, which leaves the man simply the pure subject of knowledge. The natural disposition for the prevalence of this state is genius."

Finally, Schopenhauer sketches the characteristic attitudes of self-centered men and geniuses in two passages that we may here combine: "The stamp of commonness," he says, "the expression of vulgarity, which is impressed on the great majority of countenances consists really in this, that in them becomes visible the strict subordination of their knowledge to their will, the impossibility of apprehending things otherwise than in relation to the will and its aims. All bunglers are so . . . because their intellect only becomes active when spurred on by their will. They are accordingly only capable of personal aims. . . . On the other hand, the expression of genius consists in this, that in it we distinctly read the liberation of the intellect from the service of the will, the predominance of knowledge over volition: and because all anxiety proceeds from the will, and knowledge is painless and serene, this gives to their lofty brow and clear, perceiving glance that look of great, almost supernatural serenity which at times breaks through, and consists very well with the melancholy of their other features. . . . In general he only is great who in his work seeks *not his own concerns*, but pursues an *objective end* alone.

<sup>1</sup>Schopenhauer: "The World as Will and Idea," Haldane and Kemp Translation. III, 143.

*Small* is all action directed to personal ends; for whoever is thereby set in activity knows and finds himself only in his own transient and insignificant person. He who is great finds himself in all, and therefore in the whole. The whole interests him, and he seeks to comprehend it. . . . On account of this extension of his sphere he is called great."<sup>1</sup>

### III

It is worth while to compare and contrast with Schopenhauer a contemporary analysis of the psychology of disinterestedness which has the advantage of freedom from his pessimism. In three surprisingly original little books, *The Ultimate Belief*, *Studies in Christianity*, and *What is the Kingdom of Heaven?* Arthur Clutton-Brock has made a study of what he conceives to be Christ's essential insight, which, in spite of its sometimes conventional phraseology, is not only singularly free and daring, but also completely enough disentangled from church doctrines and dogmas to be acceptable to modern minds. Taking as a key-saying the beatitude "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Clutton-Brock, after pointing out that Jesus was obliged by the poverty in general terms of his language and the simplicity of his audience to express abstract ideas in concrete images, shows that by pure in heart he meant simply what we should call single-minded, what Schopenhauer would call free from servitude to the Will, sensitive to objective and universal truth. "Christ is always telling us," he insists, "that we profit by things only when we cease to seek our own profit in them. The single-minded are those who are interested in people or things for their own sake, and not with an eye to any profit that can be got out of them. They are interested in them as an artist is interested in beauty or a philosopher in truth, not as a financier is interested in stocks and shares. . . . This kind of interest is a condition of all the highest excellence, as we know by experience. . . . But Christ goes further. He says that those who are single-minded are blessed, that is to say, happy, because they shall see God. . . . When he said that they would see God, he meant that they would be aware of God with the most supreme certainty that the human mind is capable of. He used the word see to express that certainty, just as he used the word God to express the reality and the supremacy of goodness."

Clutton-Brock's great originality lies in his quite scientific and realistic analysis, free despite its terminology from all super-

<sup>1</sup>Op. cit., III, pp. 144 and 148-50.

natural and superstitious elements, of this necessary psychological contrast between "impurity" and "purity," or, as we should say, between self-interest and disinterestedness. "What is the nature," he asks, "of the demands we all naturally and instinctively make upon life, upon each other, upon all things, even upon God, if we believe in him? It is that they shall be of use to us." . . . But, according to Christ's doctrine, "We see the reality of nothing so long as we see it in a relation of use to ourselves. . . . If we are to see things in their reality, we must escape from the relation of use to them and try to see them as they are. Then we shall find that we do rise into another relation with them, in which we see reality itself, see that which Christ called the Kingdom of Heaven." And he points out by way of example that "Dostoevsky was an artist purified by suffering as saints are purified by it; for through it he attained to that complete disinterestedness which is as necessary to the artist as to the saint." "We cannot be aware of beauty," he insists elsewhere in more general terms, "until we are freed from the instinct of self-preservation; until we see things no longer in a merely economic relation to ourselves. Sheep, for instance, become beautiful to us only when they cease to be potential mutton. . . . We must escape from that concern with our own individual survival which is called selfishness before we can be artists or men of science or philosophers, just as much as we must escape from it before we can be saints."

The relation of use is thus for Clutton-Brock opposed to the higher relations of beauty, truth, and goodness, just as for Schopenhauer will is opposed to idea. And just as Schopenhauer insists that "The genius has a double intellect, one for himself and the service of his will, the other for the world, of which he becomes the mirror in virtue of his purely objective attitude toward it," so Clutton-Brock reminds us that while we are almost obliged to see some things, such as food for example, primarily in the relation of use, so that "If we grow cabbages, we are necessarily in a relation of use to them," there are other things, such as music, which we cannot understand at all, if we see them in the relation of use. "If I listen to a symphony of Beethoven," he explains, "expecting it to give me some information of use to myself, information that will help me increase my income or cure my indigestion, I shall not hear the music at all. If I am to perceive that relation which makes the music, I must listen with the object of perceiving it and not of getting some profit for myself. True, to perceive it will profit me; I shall have the delight of experiencing beauty. But the paradox of the process is this, that I shall not

experience the beauty if I try to experience it with an eye to my own profit."

The opposition of use and beauty suggested in this paradox seems to be fundamental, and has been recognized by most writers on the æsthetic attitude and its contrast with the "practical" interest. Even Clutton-Brock's cabbages, of course, would be beautiful if we could look at them as disinterestedly as we listen to music; indeed when we forget that they are edible and look at them simply as color, there are few things that are more beautiful than a field of cabbages. "The traveller in anxiety and haste," says Schopenhauer, "will see the Rhine and its banks only as a line, and the bridges over it only as lines cutting it. In the mind of the man who is filled with his own aims, the world appears as a beautiful landscape appears on the plan of a battlefield." On the other hand, he insists, "Everything is beautiful only so long as it does not concern us. . . . Why has the sight of the full moon such a beneficent quieting, and exalting effect? Because the moon is an object of perception, but never of desire. . . . To be of no use belongs to the character of the works of genius: it is their patent of nobility." This, too, is what Edwin Muir has in mind when he says that "The plainest truth about art is that it is superfluous," it is what Veblen means in calling science the product of "idle curiosity." "Practical activities necessarily," as Buer-meyer explains, "go on in an impoverished and denuded world. The shadows and skeletons of that world put on flesh and blood when they enter the world of art. To feel the force of the change, we need only contrast the attention we give to the policeman who directs us to the nearest subway station, and the painter's attention to his model, or the biographer's to his subject. The latter seek to see and render their object in all its concrete detail. . . . To be a source of satisfaction irrespective of external relationships is to be an end and not a means, and such is the status of all works of art."

#### IV

The contrasts thus drawn between the universal and intrinsic values of beauty, to the perception of which we rise only through disinterestedness, and the narrow and merely derivative values of utility as pursued by the "practical" man, help us to understand some of the impediments to universality that have in the past impoverished our American life, and that despite the beneficial effects of recent criticism still impoverish it. If universality is achieved only by an imaginative sympathy with all situations, a

projection of one's self into all characters, temperaments, and objects, to which concern with merely personal interests is fatal, it is easy to see how almost impossible of attainment it must be in a pioneer society where exacting economic needs are unescapable. Until recently America has been unmitigatedly such a pioneer society, narrow, harsh, utilitarian, unimaginative, in which the finer types of mind were starved or smothered, and only the "practical" men flourished. The type of such men is the town selectman mentioned by Thoreau, who sees from the hill-top not the beauty of the pine-wood, but only the fact that its owner is not being taxed high enough for his wood-lot. The scarcely abated prevalence of such attitudes among us to this day makes Thoreau's "Walden," with its pitiless penetration and whimsically ironic analysis of their absurdity, still the most significant of American satires. "I see young men, my townsmen," he there tells us, "whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. How many a poor immortal soul have I met, well-nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land, tillage, mowing, pasture, and woodlot!" For himself he is careful to escape such a fate. "My imagination carried me so far," he admits, "that I had the refusal of several farms—the refusal was all I wanted—but I never got my fingers burned by actual possession. . . . I have frequently seen a poet withdraw, having enjoyed the most valuable part of a farm, while the crusty farmer supposed he had got a few wild apples only. Why, the owner does not know it for many years when a poet has put his farm in rhyme, the most admirable kind of invisible fence, has fairly impounded it, milked it, skimmed it, and got all the cream, and left the farmer only the skimmed milk." "Enjoy the land"—so Thoreau sums up his philosophy of possession by imagination—"enjoy the land, but own it not. Through want of faith and enterprise men are where they are, buying and selling, and spending their lives like serfs."<sup>1</sup>

Whether the deadly effects of material preoccupation are less or more, now that we have to translate Thoreau's "barn seventy-five feet by forty" into terms of coöperative apartments and motor cars, each American artist has, of course, to decide for himself. But there is happily little doubt that criticism of our Babbitts and their Main Streets has in the last decade somewhat

<sup>1</sup>Thoreau: "Walden," Riverside Edition, pp. 10, 130, 324.

awakened the more thoughtful among us to the horrors of crude utilitarianism. Such criticism is helping our artists, scientists, philosophers, and finer minds generally to resist the contagion of herd standards, to respect and effectuate themselves, and thus to make their indispensable though intangible contributions to our common life. Its general purport may be summed up in an inspiring passage from Santayana: "All who feel the dignity and importance of the things of the imagination need not hesitate to adopt the classification which designates them as play. We point out thereby, not that they have no value, but that their value is intrinsic, that in them is one of the sources of all worth. Uselessness is a fatal accusation to bring against any act which is done for its presumed utility, but those which are done for their own sake are their own justification. . . . We may measure the degree of happiness and civilization which any race has attained by the proportion of its energy which is devoted to free and generous pursuits, to the adornment of life and the culture of the imagination. For it is in the spontaneous play of his faculties that man finds himself and his happiness. . . . He is a slave when all his energy is spent in avoiding suffering and death, when all his action is imposed from without, and no breath or strength is left him for free enjoyment."<sup>1</sup>

Economic utilitarianism is not, however, the only form that self-imprisonment takes; and some of the others are even more seductive to the temperament of the artist, and no less deadly. Over-subjectivism, for instance, is one of the most insidious. It is hard to be on our guard against it, since a certain degree of subjectivity is normal and indeed necessary to every artist, who has to interpret others' feelings by his own; yet when it exceeds that degree it becomes stultifying. "Subjectivism," says Bertrand Russell, "the habit of directing thought and desire to our own states of mind rather than to something objective, inevitably makes life fragmentary and unprogressive. . . . Many men, when they are in love, are more interested in their own emotion than in the object of their love; such love does not lead to any essential union, but leaves fundamental separateness undiminished. . . . Only a life which springs out of dominant impulses directed to objective ends can be a satisfactory whole, or be intimately united with the lives of others."<sup>2</sup> Paraphrasing Russell, we might add that many men, when they think they are in love with art, are more interested in their own emotions and in their pose as artists,

<sup>1</sup>G. Santayana : "The Sense of Beauty," page 27.

<sup>2</sup>Bertrand Russell : "Why Men Fight," page 263.

than in the often humdrum and drudging work of their art itself. They are in fact pseudo-artists, victims of what is contemptuously called the "artistic temperament." Their art is only an idle exclamation or secretion, not a serious and careful communication. Highly revealing is the attitude of such pseudo-artists toward form; they habitually regard it with distaste or contempt, misconstruing it as a strait-jacket that would confine what they call their "freedom of self-expression," instead of recognizing in it, as the true artist does, the avenue to other minds, and loving it with some of his love for them, or rather for the beauty that is potentially of universal appeal, neither his nor theirs, but all humanity's. The true artist, as a matter-of-fact, usually despises "self-expression," if he takes time to think about it at all. Flaubert, after telling George Sand that he considers the man nothing, the work everything, continues: "This discipline is not easy to follow. But for me at least it is a sort of permanent sacrifice that I make to good taste. It would be very agreeable to me to say what I think and to solace Mr. Gustave Flaubert with phrases; but of what importance is that gentleman?"

Youth, no doubt, is normally more subjective than age—that is one of the prices it pays for the vividness of its impressions. But as we live into our world we should become more and more absorbed and merged in it, and over-subjectivity in middle or old age is consequently a sign of arrested development—an infantile fixation. The natural growth is that of Brahms, who, after a turgid and capricious youth in which he wrote promising but only romantic music, withdrew from the world for renewed study, "striving," as his friend Deiters tells us, "after moderation, endeavoring to place himself more in touch with the public, and to conquer all subjectiveness. To arrive at perspicuity and precision of invention, clear design and form, careful elaboration and accurate balancing of effect, now became with him essential and established principles."<sup>1</sup>

## V

Universality is jeopardized not only by narrow personal pre-occupations, whether in the gross form of economic greed or the subtler one of subjectivism, but also by all exclusive allegiances to small groups or cliques. Even marriage is sometimes only an *égoïsme à deux*; impartiality may suffer as much from fanatic devotion to a party as to a self; and disinterestedness may succumb

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Mason : "From Grieg to Brahms," page 185.

to group interests almost as easily as to self-interest. Such considerations help us to understand the menace of nationalism. The right kind of nationalism may be, of course, not only harmless, but highly beneficial to an artist, in so far as like other loyalties it brings him out of himself and leads him to identify himself with a group. Its danger arises when such a group becomes exclusive of larger groups, when nationalism interferes with humanism, and when, as always in the bitterness and unreason generated by war, a particular loyalty defeats universal loyalty. "The artist," says Emerson, "who is to produce a work which is to be admired, not by his friends or his townspeople or his contemporaries but by all men, and which is to be more beautiful to the eye in proportion to its culture, must disindividualize himself, and be a man of no party and no manner and no age, but one through whom the soul of all men circulates as the common air through his lungs." Such circulation is not easy now that so many windows have been shut as since 1914; yet it must be reëstablished if art, and all the higher human interests, are to breathe the breath of life. The universality of art, in all ages forgotten and betrayed by puny "patriots," is always being remembered and defended by great artists, whose deepest instincts push them to internationalism. It was a century ago that Goethe said to Eckermann: "National literature—the term has no longer much meaning to-day; the time for universal literature is come, and each ought to work to hasten its advent." "Patriotism as understood to-day," prophesied Renan in 1878, "is a fashion that will last fifty years. In a century, after it has covered Europe with blood, it will be understood no more than we understand the purely dynastic spirit of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." Yet half a century later, Mr. Buermeyer has to remind us that "Real concern for one's nation takes the form of an effort to assimilate whatever of value other nations have to offer it. To refuse to play Beethoven because we are at war with the people of whom he was one, is to confess to an equal ignorance of patriotism and music. To import nationalism, in the sense described, into art, is to betray one's country and to abandon art altogether."<sup>1</sup> "Literature, art, and science," so Shaw sums up the matter, "are free of frontiers, and those who exploit them politically are traitors to the greatest republic in the world: the Republic of Art and Science."

Other narrow loyalties, such as those to particular social classes and artistic cliques, seem to grow upon us here in America almost in proportion as we draw closer to Europe; so that as the

<sup>1</sup>L. Buermeyer: "The Æsthetic Experience," page 168.

dangers of the pioneer stage decline, those of snobbism increase. Is not the exaggerated class-consciousness of our time, in America almost as much as in Europe, largely responsible for our producing so few humanists, so many minor technicians, specialists, virtuosos, dillettanti, and snobs? Few artists nowadays are able to reach across the chasm that separates the cultivated minority from the mass of men; they have neither large enough hearts nor wise enough heads to understand the ordinary man through sympathy, and interpret for him his own deeper, and usually unconscious, values. Yet this is what the great artist must do. "Poets do not write for poets alone" argues Wordsworth, "but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists on ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the poet must descend from his supposed height, and in order to excite rational sympathy he must express himself as other men express themselves." Wordsworth was here writing especially against the manner of poetry fashionable in his day, against the so-called "poetic diction" that was as artificial, as removed from broad human appeal, as the "ultra-modern harmony" on which our musical snobs now so pride themselves; but what he says is even more true of matter than of manner. "It is into the obscure and inarticulate sense of the multitude," observes Cooley, "that the man of genius looks in order to find those vital tendencies whose utterance is his originality. As men of business get rich by divining and supplying a potential want, so it is a great part of all leadership to perceive and express what the people have already felt."<sup>1</sup> But how many modern artists are there who are magnanimous and courageous enough to do this? How many are wise enough to discern, as Emerson did, that "to fail in appreciation of another is only to surrender to one's own limitations and put a term to one's power." Instead, most of us either suffer from what psychologists call an "inferiority complex," accept the values of the herd we ought to lead, and prostitute ourselves in the search for popularity, or else through an equally misleading sense of superiority cut ourselves off from our fellows in the sterile exclusiveness of snobbism. Thus arise those two equally absurd denials of humane artistic insight, the so-called "low-brow" and the so-called "high-brow." In both, egotism has defeated æsthetic disinterestedness: the "low-brow" has sacrificed beauty to the flattering acclaim of the thoughtless crowd; the "high-brow" has sacrificed it to an illusory sense of personal distinction.

<sup>1</sup>C. H. Cooley : "Social Organization," page 148.

When we think of the devastation wrought in our modern arts by snobism—their thinness of atmosphere, their unreality of content, their preciousness of style—we cannot but regard it as one of the most fatal diseases of the artistic life of our time. It seems, for example, largely responsible for the decadence of our music and much of our poetry, while those arts, like architecture, which are beginning to escape from it are visibly taking on new life. Cooley's diagnosis of it is a wise and sympathetic one. "Some tendency to isolation and spiritual impoverishment" he says, "is likely to go with any sort of distinction or privilege. Distinction is apt to go with an exaggerated self-consciousness little favorable to a natural and hearty participation in the deeper currents of the general life. It is right to have high and unusual aims and activities, but hard to keep them free from pride, mistrust, gloom and other vices of isolation. Only a very sane mind can carry distinction and fellowship without spilling either." With this may be compared Clutton-Brock's analysis of the psychology of isolation. "We mistrust," he says, "the values of other men. We see them hostilely and in the mass, as if we ourselves were not of them. All our tired and frightened beliefs about the nature of man come from seeing other men thus; and nowadays we think it scientific to see them so, to judge them and their natures by the external symptoms of their conduct, and from these to conclude that they are animals or machines. But we are never animals or machines to ourselves; and the belief that we ourselves are exceptions to all our generalizations about mankind is a mere idol of the consciousness. Yet we are always believing this through the pressure of our own egotism, believing that the further we travel from ourselves, the less we shall find of our own values; as if they came from a private fire in our own souls, by which only those near us could be warmed, and outside this narrow circle there were always an inhuman cold. When we free ourselves from egotism, we see that the fire is outside us like the sun and that all men feel its warmth as we do."

Those who feel keenly the difficulty Cooley describes, of "carrying distinction and fellowship without spilling either," may almost despair of combining independence and universality, and conclude that they are incompatible ideals. To combine them is indeed difficult, but not impossible. Bertrand Russell gives due weight to both in a striking passage. "Without some willingness to be lonely," he says, "new thought cannot be achieved." But he adds at once: "And it will not be achieved to any purpose if the loneliness is accompanied by aloofness, so that the wish for

union with others dies, or if intellectual detachment leads to contempt. It is because the state of mind required is subtle and difficult, because it is hard to be intellectually detached yet not aloof, that fruitful thought on human affairs is not common, and that most theorists are either conventional or sterile."<sup>1</sup> It was the same perception that made Emerson insist not only that the great man keep in the crowd the independence of solitude, but that he keep it "with perfect sweetness." And this perfect sweetness, as Emerson both pleaded with such persuasiveness and exemplified in his daily life, is the fruit of love. "The good mind," he says, "chooses what is positive, what is advancing—embraces the affirmative. . . . Omit the negative propositions. Nerve us with incessant affirmatives. . . . The affirmative of affirmatives is love. As much love, so much perception. As caloric to matter, so is love to mind; so it enlarges, so it empowers it."

Such is the love that leads the artist to a universal sympathy, the love that cures all the diseases of partiality, that gives the everlasting answer of all humanists to all snobs, of the humanist in every one of us to the snob that is also in himself. Simple enough to formulate, it is of life-long difficulty in the application. Mr. Edwin Markham has put it all into a quatrain:

He drew a circle that shut me out,  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout;  
But love and I had the wit to win—  
We drew a circle that took him in.

<sup>1</sup>Bertrand Russell : "Why Men Fight," page 247.

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Sergei Rachmaninov

## SERGEI RAKHMANINOV

By VICTOR BELAIEV

### I

**R**AKHMANINOV belongs to the category of creative natures to whom a considerate and affectionate attitude is essential, who shrink from every rough contact and carefully hide their feelings and the transports of their souls from any strange gaze. He began his career as a purely lyrical composer, that is, he expressed the most intimate impulses of his soul, purified and faceted in the furnace of his creative power. In his first productions there is no suggestion of experiments in the solution of any special problems of composition. For this he was at once censured by the musicians and critics who demand from the composer a "critical" attitude towards his work, by which they meant, not austerity in the expression of his creative ego, but the extinction of that ego in favour of an imitation, a copying, of those examples of creative work which they pronounced "great." The affinity between the moods and methods of statement employed by Rakhmaninov and those of Chaikovsky was another grievance against the former, who was accused of imitating the "feeblest side" of Chaikovsky's work, which, seemingly, as a general rule falls short of the standards of "true" art, that is to say, of which one ought to feel that it has been built up in accordance with formulas consecrated by tradition and great names. (It was on these principles, by the way, that Rimsky-Korsakov's first symphony was counted as the "first" Russian symphony, in both a chronological and an ideological sense, whilst Chaikovsky's were pronounced to be merely sham symphonies). Rakhmaninov could not stand up against these attacks and defend himself with weapons similar to those with which he was assailed. His creative ideals made any form of contest impossible to him, save by means of creative work and introspection. He did not seek companions in arms and adherents, he did not form a circle of his own—he simply went on creating. But at the same time whilst striving, like every composer, to establish his creative individuality in the minds of his contemporaries and of future generations, he was deeply sensitive and found the trials connected with the vocation of a composer difficult and painful to endure.

Continuing his course, from the opera "Aleko" and the first songs Rakhmaninov, in the "Elegiac Trio," Op. 9, rises to a pathos and a power of emotional expression which are not only amazing as the work of so youthful a composer, but also put this trio on a level with the outstanding chamber-music literature of the world. The years of fruitful toil in the domain of composition which followed the writing of the "Elegiac Trio" ended with a bitter experience—the failure of his first symphony at its initial performance under Glazunov at the Russian Symphony Concert given in Petrograd on 15th March, 1897. This was the source of a series of great spiritual mortifications; it left deep traces on his psychology, which were not effaced until long after. The symphony had an unusually chilly reception by Petrograd musicians. It was Rakhmaninov's first collision with actualities in their extremest form of expression—in the strife between different schools of musical thought.

The shock sustained by Rakhmaninov proved to be still more serious for him in his quality of composer, because he was at the same time a genius of the pianoforte and a quite exceptionally talented conductor; anything which diverted him from creative work furthered the predominance in his nature of the executant over the composer, and contributed to the struggle between them and to the inward division of his creative individuality. Liszt and Schumann went through a similar struggle in their time. In the case of Liszt, who was environed by universal adoration, it passed comparatively unnoticed; for Schumann mere chance quickly and irrevocably decided it in favour of creative work. For a time another circumstance interfered with Rakhmaninov's activity in the field of composition—in the season of 1897–1898 he was invited to conduct the Private Opera (Mamonov's) at the Hermitage, which involved a very great deal of work. The rest of his life may be regarded as spent under the badge of that inward and continuous struggle, the victory inclining now to one side, now to the other. The period of his residence at Dresden (1907–1909) must be referred to the happy moments of his life as a creator. There he wrote the second symphony, the first pianoforte sonata, the symphonic poem "The Island of the Dead" and probably the third pianoforte concerto. On the other hand, amongst the tragic events in this respect must be considered his departure from Russia—since when he has composed nothing until recently—and his present life in America—the conditions of which are supremely propitious for him as a pianist. On one occasion, perhaps, he took up the cudgels on behalf of his creative work,

his antagonist being a worthy one in respect of fame and genius. This was in 1910. Nikisch, at his concert on 19th March, conducted an unsuccessful and slipshod performance of Rakhmaninov's second symphony, which on this occasion was coldly received. Then the composer, at an extra concert of the Moscow Philharmonic Society on 4th April, at which he was to appear as pianist and conductor, instead of the cantata "Spring" and the symphonic fantasia "The Crag," Op. 7, as originally intended, put on his second symphony and carried it through in such a manner as to arouse general enthusiasm, both for the work itself, and his rendering of it.

The struggle which was proceeding within Rakhmaninov was confined to himself and did not affect his reputation, popularity and fame as a composer. This was due to the broad flow of sincere, sometimes tender, sometimes severely restrained feeling, the tragicalness of the experiences, the warmth of expression, the exceptional gift for melody—though occasionally this results in a prolonged sojourn in the domain of one mood. In the breadth of Rakhmaninov's musical ideas, in the delicate play of their melodic colours, in their pensive melancholy, we cannot but perceive the expression of the moods peculiar to the Russian nature, which live in the soul of every Russian, in Russian folk-songs and in the national art and creative work of Russia. What one might call the fringe of Rakhmaninov's creative nature also came into contact with the world of gipsy song and the gipsy soul, in which Pushkin was so deeply interested; to which Chaikovsky responded (in the song "My wood-pile glows in the mist"); which attracted Debussy; and in consonance with the first two and under their influence found expression in Rakhmaninov's music (in "Aleko" and the "Fantasia on Gipsy Themes"). Through his teacher Arensky, who had been drawn into the net of the influences of the Rubinstein school, Rakhmaninov was also brought into touch with the "New Russian School" and was affected by it despite its hostility to him and its remoteness from his principles. Of other musicians whose influence is apparent in his work mention must certainly be made of Chopin (chiefly in the earlier pianoforte compositions—Op. 3, No. 1; Op. 10, Nos. 1 and 2; Op. 22, "Variations on a Theme of Chopin's") and Chaikovsky. Though their hold upon him was, at first, somewhat powerful, it was soon shaken off by the composer, or, rather, by the pianist in him, who discovered and worked out a style of his own, the distinctive peculiarity of which is seen in the fullness and power of the sonority, the inflexibility of the rhythm and the almost absolute harmoniousness of the music.

This last circumstance may account for the "out-of-dateness" of Rakhmaninov's music. Harmonious, it is not sufficiently interesting harmonically (in the sense of the tone combinations employed in it); full sounding, it has at times but little movement in its modulations and change of tonalities; logically correct and finished, it is not always interesting with respect to the novelty of the harmonic turn of the phrases which make up the form. Rakhmaninov's power of constructive thought is immense, but the harmonic material with which he works is, in these advanced days, too poor. Nevertheless, he obtains amazing creative results. Liszt's eminently rhetorical methods of composition, which were assimilated and very often employed by the composers belonging to the "New Russian School" and which consist in the mechanical transference of the musical thought to another pitch—these methods he does not adopt, preferring to them a broad and finished exposition of the principal theme, or the complete establishment of the principal key. Also he avoids sequences constructed on a mechanical shifting of the theme, up or down, at varying intervals; he always imparts to a sequence the significance of a logical or a psychological factor. The music of the innovators repels people of settled tastes by the "causticity" of the musical language and the novelty of their tonal combinations, which are stigmatised by them as "filthy." The stricter adherents of any tendency or school find it difficult to reconcile themselves to the ideology of artists whose manner is foreign to their school, especially if that manner is based on psychology. Their own canons are constructed in accordance with schemes and methods, and though they are surmountable by the best members of the school in the act of their artistic creative work, they are present in the very scheme of a composition, determining its creation and sooner or later, under some condition or other, becoming sharply prominent.

The world of Rakhmaninov's creative ideas is self-restricted, but on the other hand it is exceedingly compact and self-contained. In his work it is vain to seek for mystical depths, for the artistic solution of world and cosmic problems, for any concern with the ultimate limits of the mystery of the universe. The theme, the constant theme, of his creations is man and human experiences. And so far as the world is man's presentation of it, so far is Rakhmaninov's creative work concerned with its problems, refracted through the psychics of man as a living being, living and thinking (in contradistinction to the merely existing and inert), often collapsing in the struggle with the world, often anxious, often a

slave to some human passion, and suffering but never transgressing the bounds fixed for man as a creature living on the earth. Promethean audacities are as incompatible with his work as the unhealthy and refined experiences of the decadents. In it we have rest and solace, just as in the lingering Russian song which has absorbed into itself the healing experience and the consoling power of art to cure the troubled soul. In his work it is impossible to deny the intensity of the experiences, but it is equally impossible to ignore the fact that the composer, in inculcating and transmitting them, has so mastered them and himself, that they come to us as purified, as wise, as austere as art itself.

Here we are in collision with another side of Rakhmaninov's creative nature, with his talent for creative meditation on the phenomena of life and of his own inner world. This property of his talent must not be mistaken for deliberation or dry reasoning; it is merely the antithesis of the faculty for descriptive painting, for the characterisation in sound of external phenomena, for the tone picture, for the imitation of sounds pure and simple. In this sense Rakhmaninov's aptitude for meditation is only one of the sides of his talent as a lyricist and is manifested chiefly in the self-restriction to a limited circle of tonal expression, in self-control and self-criticism. In spite of the accepted view regarding the process of his creative work, he feels a colossal responsibility for it and has an exceptional sense of the seriousness of the creator's task. As a great master he has a thorough comprehension of the technique of his art, and it is solely by virtue of his talent and knowledge that he rises to those heights of creation which ensure him a place in the front rank of contemporary musical artists. At the same time, the methods of expression which he employs prevent him from keeping pace with the times, which are more complex in this respect. It may even be permissible to assert that if Rakhmaninov had not been fated to fall into the whirlpool of contemporary music, if he had been surrounded by an atmosphere more favourable to the development of his talent, he might have given us considerably more than the much we have received from him.

## II

Rakhmaninov's first period may be regarded as closing with the first break in his activity in the field of composition, that is, in 1897, when he had tested his powers in almost every branch of the art, beginning with the smaller forms and ending

with opera and symphony. In many respects one of the most interesting works of this period is the First Piano Concerto, written in 1890-1891, and revised by the composer in 1917. In this concerto it is possible on the one hand to trace all the influences which determined the creative figure of Rakhmaninov, the composer, and on the other to perceive his artistic personality in an aspect in which it rarely appeared again. The Lisztian octaves and grandiose chords in the introduction to the first movement; the construction of the melody of its first theme, which consists of two sections, one of two bars repeated a fifth above and the other of one bar dropping to a major second and leading to the subdominant of the key—a construction recalling the manner of the "New Russian School"; the definitely Chopinesque pace (*vivo*); the tension of melody of the second theme; the augmented harmonies of the concluding section, constructed sequentially (at a fifth)—a method employed by Skryabin down to his latest works; lastly the Chopinesque close of the coda of the first movement—all these are manifest traces of the mutually-intersecting influences on whose soil the figure of Rakhmaninov, the composer, was shaped. On a further examination of the concerto our attention is attracted by the following features: the confrontation<sup>1</sup> of the chords in the principal theme of the Andante (a method unusual to Rakhmaninov) and the twice-repeated "Russian" organ point of its middle section, forcibly reminding us that one of the composer's teachers, Arensky, had come from the "Russian" school; the harsh suspensions in the principal section of the finale, which impart a feeling of great tenseness to its music; the strong influence of Chaikovsky in the first part of the second subject (Andante *expressivo*) and, lastly, the Lisztian Italianisms of its middle portion. With all this, the concerto amazes us by the unity of its general conception and structure, by the freshness of the thought and by the intensity and harmoniousness with which it is saturated and which make its style akin to that of the early Skryabin, however strange this may appear at a first glance. An attentive study of this concerto even makes us ask ourselves whether it did not directly affect the construction of Skryabin's concerto in the same key, which also has three movements and in the writing of which the Chopin influence is also very marked. Thanks to the tenseness of its style, Rakhmaninov's first concerto, apart from its value as a fine musical production, has an important significance in the history of the evolution of the harmonic thought and musical language of Russia. It is a sporadic manifestation of a

<sup>1</sup> i. e., immediate following.

tendency to cultivate the development of the musical language on the part of a composer who puts the centre of gravity of his creative work in its impregnation by the psychological essence of the harmonic realms already discovered and explored.

Written as an examination exercise, Rakhmaninov's opera "Aleko" is far superior to the ordinary "student's task," and, like his first concerto, its artistic life persists to the present day. In it, in a world of youthful joyousness, frankness and enticing sincerity, are imprinted all the traits of the composer's creative nature, except, perhaps the restrained severity which gradually and persistently permeates his later works. In "Aleko" we see the crystallization of the composer's vocal style, which is fully revealed in the songs Op. 4 and especially Op. 8 and Op. 14.

In Op. 4 we meet with such finished productions as "O fair one, do not sing to me" (No. 4) amazing in the expression and colour of the writing; "Morning" (No. 2) with its enchanting and delicately harmonized passage "And day, which seems distrustful still"; and the Russian, leisurely "O thou, my cornfield" (No. 5). The succeeding compositions merely confirm the favourable impression. The first song from Op. 8, "The Water Lily" fascinates by its playful grotesqueness. The music seems to sparkle with the glittering reflections of the moon and to express the warmth and moisture of the lily. "Child, thou art fair as a flow'ret" (Op. 8, No. 2) is permeated with a tender feeling of pure contemplation—a feeling which possessed the composer again in the song "At my window" (Op. 26, No. 10) and in others. "The Islet" (Op. 16, No. 2) is an aquarelle, the incarnation of a dainty vision, and is written with amazing delicacy and refinement. In this song everything is so complete that even the swaying accompaniment (a rather monotonous formula often employed by Rakhmaninov) here seems extraordinarily appropriate and in keeping with everything else. "Long since in love" (Op. 14, No. 3) is slightly suggestive of the composer's manner in "Spring Waters" (Op. 14, No. 11), spirited, masculine, broad-flowing, falling in foaming cascades of sound.

If the most lyrical, most "singing" string of Rakhmaninov's creative nature vibrates in his songs, his piano pieces express his most intimate moods, with their vast diapason ranging from the most dainty and delicate to the most vigorous and tempestuous. An examination of the piano compositions of the first period—"Morceaux de Fantaisie," Op. 3; "Morceaux de Salon," Op. 10; and "Six Moments Musicaux," Op. 16—gives us new material both for the determination of the influences which affected his

work and for the characterisation of the personal traits of his creative nature. As in the first concerto, so in Rakhmaninov's piano productions it is extremely interesting to note the influence of Chopin, either in an almost pure form (in the "Elegie," Op. 3, No. 1, or the "Nocturne," Op. 10, No. 1), or blended with the influence of Chaikovsky (in the "Valse," Op. 10, No. 2). The latter can be seen more definitely in the "Melodie," Op. 10, No. 4. Here his piano style of exposition is adopted by Rakhmaninov, particularly in the "Allegro moderato" and "Moderato" episodes, which are contrasted with the principal theme. As for the individual features of Rakhmaninov's work, they are defined with sufficient clearness in the compositions of his first period. The tonal closes of the principal periods; the frequent additions to them of plagal cadences; the hardly less frequent use of two keys, the second (which immediately follows the first) being the key of the upper third<sup>1</sup>—this, with a fundamental minor key, hardly gives the impression of modulation; the slight modulational mobility of the episodes, in constructing which the composer plunges into the more and more remote subdominant keys; lastly, the habit of deviating into constructions analogous in respect of tonal functions, but made to differ in colour by the use of signs of alteration, and creating the impression of a prolonged use of chromatism as tone colour and as a formative principle—in these we have the individual peculiarities of Rakhmaninov's style, assimilated by him for the practical purpose of composition, in working with which he attains great "variety in monotony" and a highly finished (almost monotonal) form. These methods, which saw the light at the outset of his creative work, have remained with the composer all through his life, down to the very latest opus numbers. The tonal ending of the themes<sup>2</sup> is undoubtedly borrowed by him from Chopin, who is very definite in his fundamental conceptions and very often employs the method of repetition (reminiscence). But Chopin's influence in an active and stimulating form is most evident in Rakhmaninov's pianism, which is permeated by the Polish composer's pianistic methods—the figurations, the tonal ornamentation, the structure of the figure of the accompaniment upon which the inner life of a composition depends. The figuration of the left hand and the prolonged thirds in the right hand of No. 4 of the "Six Moments Musicaux" (Op. 16); the swaying movement of the left hand in No. 5 of Op. 16 (and especially the emphasized appearance in the right hand of the minor seventh of the key);

<sup>1</sup>e. g. A minor immediately followed by C major; C major by E minor; and so on.

<sup>2</sup>i. e., ending them in the key in which they began.

the inner parts of the chromatic suspensions interwoven into the figural design of the first of the preludes Op. 23; the chromatic progressions in double-notes in the ninth prelude; and much besides—these may serve as illustrations of Chopin's influence. It is, of course, understood that these compositions sound far richer than their prototypes, owing to the sonority of the modern instruments on which they are played.

In Russian pianism of the present-day three main tendencies are manifest; that of Rakhmaninov, originating directly from Liszt and Chopin; that of Skryabin, emanating entirely from Chopin; and that of Medtner, deeply rooted in the classical tradition. The remaining tendencies, with the exception, of course, of Rubinstein's, do not appear to be pianism in the proper sense of the word, since they represent nothing more than the calculated choice of the attire in which to deck a composition, and are so dependent on the methods of orchestral writing and treatment of the parts that they cannot be regarded as pure pianism. Medtner's most recent pianism meets Rakhmaninov's on the common ground of the employment of similar harmonic complexes, but the latter's is by far the superior, since in his pianistic attainments he continues on the contemporary plane the principles and tendencies of Liszt, who strove to obtain from the piano the sonority of the orchestra, without, however, sacrificing the individuality of the piano as such.

Leaving aside the popular "Fantasia" (first suite) for four hands (two pianos) Op. 5, the orchestral fantasia "The Crag," Op. 7 (Lermontov's poem), and other compositions of the first period, we will dwell only on the "Elegiac Trio" for violin, violoncello and piano, Op. 9. In this trio is concentrated a forecast of Rakhmaninov's future big works and their moods. In the form itself (the second movement—theme with variations—and the finale with reminiscences of the principal theme) the influence of Chaikovsky's trio is evident, but in respect of subject matter and execution it shows itself to be an absolutely independent, mature, finished, sincere and poetical production, the expression of a profound elegiac feeling, masculine in its grief, powerful in its statement. The trio is distinguished by beautiful thematic work, economy of the means of expression, continuous flow of tense thought, and unity of creative design. The composer adopts one of the most difficult of musical forms—the variation—in place of a middle movement. Demanding an enormous reserve of sensitiveness and concentrated attention on the part of the creator, which alone can give oneness of mood to the variational form, it is

exploited by Rakhmaninov with singular skill. The treatment of the instruments in this trio is masterly.

### III

If, in the first period of his creative work, Rakhmaninov's contact with the realm of the tragic was merely casual and was only expressed creatively in a particularly intense concentration of the elegiac feeling, his second period was passed almost entirely under the sign of tragedy. The change in the composer's frame of mind can be traced with remarkable distinctness in the songs of this period (Op. 21 and Op. 26) which begins, symbolically as it were, with the composition of "Fate" (to Beethoven's fifth symphony) and ends with the last song of Op. 26 (No. 15) with its tragic closing exclamation: "I cannot sing the songs of joy!" Prior to this time the composer was possessed by other moods and feelings. Then he could entreat: "Do not, I pray thee, do not go!" (Op. 4, No. 4); then he could sing: "Child, thou art fair as a flow'ret" (Op. 8, No. 2); "Thou art so loved by all" (Op. 14, No. 6); "Love springs up within my heart" (Op. 14, No. 10); "I await thee" (Op. 14, No. 1); "She is beautiful as noon" (Op. 14, No. 9); then he could be touched by the beauties of nature, could console and encourage. But now other moods dominate him. Rarely do we encounter amongst them moments of tranquillity and rest, as in "The bird-cherry blooms at my window" (Op. 26, No. 10). For the most part it is the mood of abandonment: "Once more alone" (Op. 26, No. 9); "An avenging God has deprived me of all" (Op. 26, No. 2); the mood of grief and sadness: "How great my grief" (Op. 21, No. 12); The "Night is mournful" (Op. 26, No. 12); "Mercy I beg" (Op. 26, No. 8); etc.; and the mood of loss: "Over the new-made grave" (Op. 21, No. 2); "On the death of a linnet" (Op. 21, No. 8). But side by side with the tragic experiences this period also gives us a series of great creative attainments, which either surmount tragedy, such as the cantata "Spring," Op. 20, or lie outside the plane of tragedy, such as the Second Piano Concerto, Op. 18 and the Violoncello Sonata, Op. 19. This goes to confirm the opinion previously expressed that Rakhmaninov's creative powers could attain to full bloom only in an atmosphere of artistic good-will.

The second concerto, filled with a feeling of depth and passion, of intensity and power, vanquishing all doubts—this concerto must be ranked as the highest creative achievement of this period. It is dedicated to Dr. Dahl, who restored Rakhmaninov by

suggestion from the alarming mental condition of anguish and lack of self-confidence into which he had fallen immediately before he wrote it. Harmonious in form and compact in dimensions, the concerto, from the first to the last note, is saturated with "lyrical" emotion, pouring itself out in the amazing beauty of the theme—melodies, which dominate all the other elements of the work (development, episodes) and impregnate with themselves the turn of every harmonic phrase and every moment of resonance, and in which one is conscious of a sense of genius. The middle, slow movement (*Adagio sostenuto*), with its quiet, dreamy mood, is a perfect revelation of the depth and serenity of feeling in this most popular of piano concertos.

Almost simultaneously with the second concerto, Rakhmaninov wrote the Violoncello Sonata, Op. 19, which has much in common with the concerto (in the turn of the thematic phrases), but at the same time displays a great difference from it, partly in the romantic, partly in the almost classical approach to the treatment of the material. In the rhythm of the introductory chords of the *Allegro moderato* of the first movement and in the impetuosity of the principal section there is a suggestion of Schumann, as well as in the principal section of the second movement (*Allegro scherzando*), with its sustained notes in the bass, its repeated notes in the upper parts and its dotted scale-form passages. The principal section of the third movement (*Andante*) is very nearly classical Beethoven. The finale (*Allegro mosso*), as well as all the episodes and second themes of the other movements, are in Rakhmaninov's individual manner, with animated figurations and somewhat immobile harmonies.

The cantata "Spring," Op. 20, with its cloying colours, its all-but monothematism, its unity of design, appears to be a sort of sketch for the two operas which were to come. In this production the astonishing power of the dramatic expression in the middle movement seems to symbolize the cruel witchcraft of ferocious winter vanquished and dispelled by the vivifying breath of spring. The two operas, "The Niggardly Knight," Op. 24 (to Pushkin's text) and "Francesca da Rimini," Op. 25 (libretto by Modest Chaikovsky) were written one immediately after the other (1904-1905); both are marked by the same concentration of feeling, centralized on the fundamental idea of the composition. In the first of them Rakhmaninov, in laying out his subject for a tone picture, approaches the delineation of the scenic situations from the experiences of the performers and not from a tonal characterisation of the external situations. In the cellar scene (the second

tableau) he paints, not the piles of gold and its glitter, not the gloom of the cellar, but the insane passion mastering the miser, who has surrendered to his maniacal idea all the powers of human attachment. The subject of the second opera, "Francesca da Rimini," is accepted and transformed by the composer in its most tragic aspect. Side by side with the depiction of the feeling of love and ecstasy (Paolo and Francesca) with an astonishing power of expression the composer gives a not less amazing presentation of the forces hostile to man's happiness, drawing an agitating picture of despair and grief in the tableau portraying Hell in the prologue of the opera. By the way, in opera as well as in the cantata "Spring," this composer (one of the first to employ the method) treats the chorus, singing with closed lips, as an instrumental colour, the effect obtained being due to their power of expression.

Other noteworthy compositions of this period include several remarkable songs, such as "The Lilac" (Op. 21, No. 5) permeated with the aroma of spring and enchanting in its tenderness; "Twilight" (Op. 21, No. 3); "Dearest, let us depart" (Op. 26, No. 5); and "At my window" (Op. 26, No. 10), exquisite in their mood; "The Fountain" (Op. 26, No. 11), spirited and sonorous; and many more. There are also the "Variations on a theme of Chopin's" (Op. 22) and the book of Preludes (Op. 23) comprising a series of outstanding piano pieces which prepared the way for the "Études-Tableaux," Op. 33 and 39. Of Op. 23, No. 2 (B-flat major) is remarkable for the grandiose sonority of the broad figurations for the left hand and the heavy crashes of the descending octaves of the melody; No. 3 (D minor) presents itself as a refined, though rather ponderous and "chevaleresque" minuet; No. 5 (G minor) in march form conquers us by its unyielding and, one might say, hypnotising rhythm; and No. 7 (C minor) by the dramaticism of its subject.

#### IV

Rakhmaninov's third period is even more tragic than the second. The feeling with which it is impregnated might be described as tragedy raised to the  $n$ -th power. At the same time it is a period of great artistic and harmonic achievements, and of the working-out of a finished style of composition, grandiose and impressive in its massiveness and severity. Rakhmaninov's creative ideas are now moulded into huge monolithic blocks and even his smaller compositions, excepting, perhaps, the songs forming Op. 34, are grouped into series connected by some common idea,

as, for instance, the "Études-Tableaux," Op. 33 and 39 and the songs, Op. 38. Both sets of Études may, indeed, be regarded as one, not only because their titles are similar, but also because they are bound together by a common conception. The composer himself, connects them by transferring three Études originally intended for Op. 33 to Op. 39. Two works, the Second Symphony (Op. 27) and the First Sonata (Op. 28) stand on the border-line between the second and third periods, but all the subsequent compositions belong entirely, by their style and psychology, to the composer's third creative period.

The second symphony, in E minor, intensifies the moods of the second concerto, rendering them in a somewhat austere hue. In it the composer appears designedly to diminish the brilliant colour and sentiment of the concerto, whilst at the same time he augments their intensity. In the symphony the orchestra is deprived of any vividly individual colour (such as the piano in the concerto, the voices in the cantata and the operas) and it would seem that the composer desires thereby to obtain from it a gloomy and almost leaden hue, harmonizing with the idea of the work and also largely dependent on the diatonic basis of its harmonies—triads complicated by sevenths of the diatonic scale, levelling the impressions produced by harmonies of different logical functions, which now have more community and connection with one another. The tender and sorrowful sighs of the principal subject of the first movement which give way to the touching, one might say imploring, theme of the second subject, bind the movement, as it were, and compose its chief content. The motif of the principal subject of the first movement, somewhat altered, serves as the fundamental motif of the second movement (*Allegro molto*) and upon this alteration depends the contrast if not in the mood, at all events, in the tempo, rhythm and general character of the two movements. The theme of the third (slow) movement, with its timid ascents in the strong parts of the bar to a second above and its gentle descents to a third, borrowed from the second subject of the first movement (a device which afterwards found a place in Glazunov's compositions)—this theme determines, with its opening bars, the fundamental character of the whole movement with its smoothly flowing, heartfelt music. The finale of the symphony has in its character something in common with the violoncello sonata, but its themes are finer.

Rakhmaninov's symphonic poem "The Island of the Dead," Op. 29, written to Boecklin's picture bearing the same title, already differs considerably in style from the symphony, in which moments

of incomplete mastery of the material and imperfect embodiment of the composer's intentions are still evident. Here everything is permeated with one basic idea—the idea of the utter hopelessness and cold tranquillity reigning in nature, the cloister of the dead—a tranquillity which freezes every outburst of living human feeling (the middle section of the poem), whether of fear or of hope.

From "The Island of the Dead," the path of the composer leads direct to "The Bells," Op. 35, a poem, to the text of Edgar Poe, for orchestra, chorus and solo voices. This is a grandiose choral symphony, the story of the circle of human life with the enchantments of its youthful impulses (first movement), its dreams of bliss (second movement), its dread of calamities and dangers (third movement), and its rest in the peace of the grave. Together with the poet the composer stands gazing at the pictures of life as they unroll before him, but his interpretation of them is so tragic that the listener cannot for a moment free himself from a feeling of dread and a sense of disaster, which are hidden even in the moods of the first two sections of the poem, joyous and bright though they seem to be. The whole dramatic action, if one may so express oneself, of this symphony-poem takes place on a background of pealing bells, small and great, employed by the composer not as a mere imitation but as reproducing the throbbing of his heart-strings, vibrating to every possible shade of tone produced by the bells which form the accompaniment and symbolize the experiences of humanity. The mastery with which "The Bells" is written is absolutely marvellous; the strength of the impression produced is overwhelming and the unity of the general conception rigidly maintained.

Just as the second piano concerto is preëminent amongst the composition of Rakhmaninov's second period, so the Third Concerto, Op. 30, occupies a foremost place in the piano-works of the third period. In respect of thematic material, rhythm and general characteristics, these two concertos have so much in common that the composer would appear to be expounding one and the same idea in different ways. But, however great the merit of the second concerto, however fine in itself and in its themes, it pales when compared with the third. The grandiosity, sonorousness, fullness of resonance, persuasive power and masterly writing in the third concerto are quite exceptional and absolutely extraordinary. If Rakhmaninov had written nothing but his three concertos, his name must have been included amongst those of the greatest composers of the present day. The powerful interpretation of

this concerto by the composer stirred the feelings of all who have heard it and will be forever remembered by them, just as Liszt's playing was preserved in the recollections of his contemporaries.

Of Rakhmaninov's two piano sonatas, Op. 28 and Op. 36, the first, like the second symphony, borders on the new period of creative work, but the second concentrates in itself all the peculiarities of his later compositions, including their sombre colouring. Its themes, constructed on falling waves of sound, its sighing chromatics and its mournful tones seem to tell us the "weary tale of life" borne on the breeze by the monotonous chiming of the midnight hour. Compare the heart-rending impression produced by the sonata with the analogous impression received from Medtner's wonderful song "Insomnia" (Op. 37, No. 1).

In complete accord with the general tendency of this period is the composer's attraction towards religious music, in the domain of which he wrote the Liturgy, Op. 31, and especially the "Vsenoshchnaya,"<sup>1</sup> Op. 37. In the music of the "Vsenoshchnaya" which represents one of Rakhmaninov's greatest achievements, the composer comes into contact with the sources of the old Russian folk-minstrelsy, the accumulation, purged of every fortuitous ingredient, of the ancient Russian tonal conceptions. As the contrapuntist of the middle ages uses the old tunes, the so-called *cantus firmus*, for the creation of grandiose contrapuntal works, so Rakhmaninov in his "Vsenoshchnaya" employs the old intoned melodies of the Russian Church, partly Byzantine in their origin, for the creation of grandiose tonal compositions in the strict Russian Church style *a cappella*.

A few words remain to be said concerning the songs and studies, in order to conclude this brief description of Rakhmaninov's work. Already in Op. 21 and 26 (the songs "On the death of a linnet" and "The Fountain") we observe that the composer has assimilated the style of his vocal works to that of his pianoforte compositions. This effect is still more noticeable in the songs of Op. 34. The manner in which "The Storm" (No. 3) is written is clear evidence of this. The piano accompaniment is not less satisfying than any of Rakhmaninov's piano preludes (in this song the peacefulness of the middle section is also noteworthy). The exquisite and spiritual "The Fleeting Wind" (No. 4), like several others belongs to the same category of songs. But the supreme expression of this tendency is seen in the "Vocalise" (No. 14), in

<sup>1</sup>Vespers.

which the vocal melody is without a text and is treated as an instrumental cantilena. The songs of Op. 38 belong wholly to Rakhmaninov's third period, both in the subtlety of their up-to-date texts (by Blok, Bely, Severyanin, Bryusov, Sologub and Balmont) and in the no less subtle and delicate music, which embraces all the varying moods of Rakhmaninov's muse, from the "Russian" lyrical ("At night in my garden," No. 1) to the grotesque ("The Ratcatcher," No. 4).

The piano preludes, Op. 32, seems to bring to an end the series of preludes written by Rakhmaninov from the beginning of his career as a composer. Prominent amongst these are No. 1, C-major, a technical sketch; the heart-rending B-flat major (No. 2); the E-major (No. 3) with its mediæval colouring; the pastoral and gracious B-major (No. 11) and the C-sharp minor (No. 12), expressing as it were the importunate, obstinate repetition of one and the same persistent idea. The "*Études-Tableaux*," Op. 33 and 39, as their title indicates, prove to be something more than sketches. They are a series of psychological pictures, lying wholly on the new plane of the composer's thought, a plane which has some similarity with that of Medtner's harmonic language. All but three of these *Études* are written in the minor. The B-minor (Op. 33, No. 1) is in march form, with a tramping rhythm; the C-major (Op. 33, No. 2) is a dialogue on a background of swaying Rakhmaninovian figurations; the E-flat major (Op. 33, No. 4) has the bell chimes; the C-sharp minor (Op. 33, No. 6) is closely akin to the famous C-sharp minor prelude (Op. 3, No. 2), but its subject is more dramatic; the first A-minor of Op. 39 (No. 2—No. 6 of this set is also in A-minor) resembles in statement and mood "The Island of the Dead"; the B-minor (No. 4) is written in the style of a gavotte, but with a free change of tempi (there is no time-signature at the beginning); the E-flat minor (No. 5) is in the broad Rakhmaninovian manner; while the C-minor (No. 7) is in a quintessentially sombre, funereal mood.<sup>1</sup>

## V

In order to form a more or less accurate appreciation of the creative work of Sergei Rakhmaninov, it is absolutely essential to overcome a series of difficulties with which we are not confronted when estimating the productions of other composers. The chief

<sup>1</sup>To the works mentioned in this article must be added the two works of major importance composed during his residence in the United States, as the composer had the kindness to inform me: The "Fourth Concerto" for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 40 (finished 1926) and the "Russian Songs" for Orchestra and Chorus, Op. 41 (1926).—Ed.

of these difficulties consists in the establishment of a correct view of the significance of the period through which Russian music is passing at the present time.

The fact is, during the last ten years—or perhaps during the last few years—Russian music has made an extremely rapid advance, both in regard to Western music and to itself. Hardly a century has elapsed since the birth of Michael Glinka, who instituted the principle of nationalism in Russian musical art, and already that art is not merely recognized by the world but enjoys a world-wide influence. In that time, not only has it adopted and assimilated the European canons of creative work, but it has outgrown them—and it has done this at an almost fabulous rate of speed. And just as Russian music in its development is outstripping European music, so the new tendencies in themselves are leaving behind and outgrowing the old, and this not in a tranquil, historical course but in stormy rivalry and antagonism. Simultaneously with these riches (which, at the ordinary rate of progress, might be regarded as the maximum of possible attainments for more than a decade to come) new and even more valuable treasures are being brought to light, concentrating in themselves still more completely the spirit of the times and surpassing the achievements of fifty years of normal historical development.

Even as the creative thought of Russian music aspires to growth and conquest, so also it aims at the organic consolidation of the positions it has captured. A country without a musical past, Russia, in the remarkable work of S. I. Taneev, possesses the theory of the whole era of counterpoint in the strict style, with its age-long history. A country without a classical period, Russia presents her creative mastery in the works of S. I. Taneev, Medtner, Goedicke, and others and makes it an accomplished fact since it is necessary to her creative advance; regarding everything capable of being mastered from the visual angle of contemporary creative psychology, and advancing to with all the resources of contemporary technique, *i.e.*, with resources which the original period lacked.

And it was Rakhmaninov's fate to live in the midst of this multitude of jostling and divergent currents in contemporary Russian music, currents whose force was exerted in one of two directions—either towards the capture of new positions or towards the consolidation of those already won; to live at the moment of the tremendous rupture in the history of Russian music brought about by Skryabin, who rejected, so to speak, the age in which his contemporaries had their being. Furthermore, Rakhmaninov

had to work under these conditions, asserting his creative individuality and moulding by his influence as a creator the life surrounding him. In this concourse of circumstances we see the reason for the profoundest tragedy of his work—the tragedy of a great soul expressing itself in language and by methods which were antiquated, *whereas under other conditions they would have harmonized with the times.*

(Translated by S. W. Pring.)

## THE RELATION BETWEEN MUSIC AND POETRY

By J. P. DABNEY

THERE is in these days a great deal being written, argued and thought as to what constitutes poetry, and what quality it is wherein poetry as an art differentiates itself from prose as an art. To discuss this question upon its moral or æsthetic side, to claim that the emotional idea dynamically expressed constitutes poetry, or, as Professor David Masson has said, that "at a certain pitch of fervor or feeling, the voice does instinctively lift itself into song,"<sup>1</sup> is to beg the question.

Many of the great poets have left us their definitions. Shakespeare tells us,

"That art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes."

Coleridge says that poetry is "the vision and the faculty divine"; Wordsworth, that it is "emotion recollected in tranquillity," Shelley, "the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds."

But these definitions are elusive, inconclusive, and utterly fail to define what poetry intrinsically is. They fail because when we attempt to synthesize upon the subjective side, we are not dealing with the fundamental principles wherein poetry as an art differentiates itself from prose as an art, but with that emotional and spiritual quality—the *soul* of the art, one might call it—which inheres equally in both verse and prose. If it were not so, we should have to class as poetry an immense body of idealistic prose—the glamored romances of Hawthorne, for instance, or Stevenson's *Essays*, or Kipling's *Jungle Books*. For, finally, the difference between poetry as an art and prose as an art is purely one of *form*.

Form is the law of expression, whether of a universe or a minor lyric. It is the objectifying of the abstract, the bringing of the ideation into being. And we notice that all of the expression of the universe is subject to fixed laws. Nature always develops her forms symmetrically. She does the same thing in the same

<sup>1</sup>David A. Masson : "Theories of Poetry."

way. Crystals fall into similar geometric patterns. The delicately balanced sepals and petals of a flower are always reproduced along the same lines, though they may vary in secondary details. Form being the law of expression, the poet cannot, if he is to express himself at all, escape the use of form. He can only choose between a good form and a bad form; between a symmetrical form and an amorphous form. And we might quote here the words of Robert Schumann: "The history of all arts has proven that *mastery of form* leads talent to continually increasing freedom."

The generic distinction between poetry and prose is that poetry is *in* rhythm, and prose—except in a large, loose, and cosmic sense—is *not* in rhythm. And by rhythm I do not mean a vague, loose, and flexible something, to be determined by each experimenter for himself, but a fundamental law, as exact and determinative, as the laws of mathematics or those which govern the orbits of the heavenly bodies.

Professor Corson's definition of Verse, "poetry is definite thought, wedded to music, which is indefinite"<sup>1</sup>—comes nearer to the truth than any other because it is in music that lie the roots of verse, and to music we must turn if we would really understand these basic rhythmic laws.

"In the beginning, out of the mists of Time, hand in hand, came those twin sisters of Art—Music and Verse. Man in the exuberant infancy of the race, instinctively danced, and as he danced he sang. The rhythm of his lips gave the rhythm to his foot, and the rhythm of his foot gave the rhythm to his lips, the two interchangeably linked."<sup>2</sup>

We may form some idea of how all this would come about by studying the records of the songs and dances of primitive peoples. First, the primitive man, expressing his emotions, warlike or otherwise, in crude dancing, accentuating his movements by a recurring stamp of the foot. Vocal expression would accompany these gymnastics; at first mere inarticulate noises—like the click of the bushmen, for instance—later taking shape in exclamatory phrases, then longer phrases, at last emerging into the true lyric, always marked off by that regularly recurrent accent of the dance-step.<sup>3</sup> And so on and on, down the ages, until, coming to the horizons of literature we find—as in Homer—the already perfected rhythmic instrument.

<sup>1</sup>Hiram Corson : "The *Æsthetics of Verse*."

<sup>2</sup>J. P. Dabney : "The Musical Basis of Verse."

<sup>3</sup>Professor Francis B. Gummere, in *The Beginnings of Poetry*, tells us that savages are not apt to have the sense of melody and harmony well developed, but that "their sense of exact rhythm is universal and profound."

This close inter-relation between music and verse was always recognized in earlier days. It is only in comparatively modern times that we have lost the sense of it. The Greeks sang or chanted their lyrics to the sound of the lyre or other instrument, and "the Bacchic songs of alternating mirth and sadness gave birth, through the dithyramb, to tragedy, and, through the Comus hymn, to comedy."<sup>1</sup>

Classic literature declined with the decline of the Roman Empire, but the Middle Ages found a fresh and vigorous Art in the songs of the *Trouvères*, the Troubadours, the Minnesingers, who, singing in the vernacular, went from castle to castle, from town to town spreading their Art among the people.

And as culture came to England it came in the same manner. The great age of Elizabeth was overflowing with music. Music was an indispensable accomplishment of the educated gentleman, and, in cruder forms, the solace of the multitude. High or low, none could escape its influence. Such lyrics as we find scattered through Shakespeare's plays could have emanated only from a music-saturated soul.

The sense of quantity—that method by which the Greeks and Romans coördinated their verse—though in those flexible tongues accent and quantity obviously coincide—died out with the dying Latin culture. The poets of the Middle Ages sang in a fresh spirit, entirely by ear.

It is universally conceded that English verse will not scan, a fact which has caused a great deal of trouble to teachers of English verse, and given rise to colorless symbols of analysis, such as XA, AX, XXA, XAX, etc. But when we substitute as a means of mensuration the music bar for the classic foot-divisions, all difficulties vanish; for music and verse are arts of a cognate order. In other words, they are both *arts of sound*—of vibration, and are governed by the same basic laws.

Technically music and verse overlap but a little way; therefore, in adopting the symbols of musical notation for the measurement of verse, we cannot push the analogy beyond the very rudiments of musical form. With the complicated *science* of music, verse has nothing to do. In so brief a paper as this the subject—a large one—must of necessity be treated in a most condensed manner.

This basic principle of music is uniform measurements of time, marked off by a regularly recurring, and interconsistent *accent*, constituting a time-integer. The same is true of verse;

<sup>1</sup>J. A. Symonds : "The Greek Poets."

but in illustrating the rhythmic mensuration of verse, we have to reduce musical movement to its bed-rock, or to *primary* rhythm. This is, stated briefly, a movement of two beats to a measure (the first accented, the second non-accented) and a movement of three beats to a measure (the first accented, the other two non-accented). To the ear, these measures are marked off by the regularly recurring accent; to the eye (in written music) they are separated by a vertical line called the bar. Music, of course, makes multiples of these figures.

We can analyze, and mark off verse exactly along these same lines. We shall find that all verse stands upon these two basic movements;—*i. e.*, two words (or beats) to a measure, or else three words (or beats) to a measure. In musical notation a single note may be multiplied, or, again, it may be absent, its time-value being represented by a rest-mark. In verse this is quite otherwise. The words themselves represent the time-value, and every syllable (or time-unit) must, as a rule, be present in the measure in order to establish the generic rhythm. I say, as a rule, because in three-beat rhythm we sometimes find a heavy, accented word held over two beats of a measure, but ordinarily the measure must be full, or a sufficient number of measures in the verse or line must be full, in order to produce upon the ear the sense of that rhythm in which the poem is conceived. If this is not done the verse will halt and limp.

There may be an unaccented note (or word) before the entering accent, which unaccented note is called the *anacrusis*. The *anacrusis* alters the cadence of the verse, but in no way affects the basic rhythm.

I give an example of two-beat rhythm:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."—

And of three-beat rhythm:

"Half a league, half a league, half a league onward."—

In very rare cases a rest (or pause effect) may be employed, imparting to the verse a staccato effect.

Thus:

"Break, break, break  
On thy cold grey stones, O sea."

Beyond this elementary measurement of verse, there is of course a larger swing, or stress, of the line, and again of the stanza; comparable roughly to the musical phrase and to the completed theme.

There is also a great deal to be said with regard to the motion of verse, and the differentiated motion of various verse-schemes. Certain measures impart a sense of tranquillity; others impress us with a sense of movement; these effects being dependent upon the special rhythmic vibration. But our limits forbid treating of it here. It may all be found in my book, "The Musical Basis of Verse."

Another important quality in which verse is closely related to music is *Melody*. Says Professor Corson: "The fusing or combining principle of a verse is *Melody*. We often meet with verses which scan, as we say, all right, and yet we feel that they have no vitality as verses. . . . They are not the product of feeling, which attracts to itself (a great fact) vocal elements, either vowels or consonants, which chime well together and in accord with the feeling."<sup>1</sup>

The greatest factor of verse-melody is, of course, rhyme, and I may perhaps make clearer by an illustration why rhyme has a musical root; but it must be kept in mind that, in all these comparisons, I am referring to the most elementary forms of music.

If we take any folk-song, or simple melodic phrase, we shall see that it begins on one tone and then, half-way through, swings into another chord—usually the chord of the dominant—returning to finish upon the tonic, or original chord. This satisfies the ear, because the tonic triad is the "perfect authentic cadence" and completes the melody.

Now let us compare a simple quatrain of verse:

"She dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A maid whom there were none to praise  
And very few to love."

We find we get, at the end of the second line, a tone (in the word "Dove") which requires a cognate tone at the end of the fourth line to complete it to the ear;—hence rhyme. In this stanza the first and third lines swing off from cadence, with a different tone of their own. These do not *need* to rhyme, but there *must* be a finish-rhyme at the end of the stanza or the ear will get no sense of cadence.

It seems superfluous to say that rhymes do not require to be alternated as in the foregoing stanza. With complex rhyme-schemes they are often irregular and far apart; but they must be so correlated in the stanza as to leave upon the ear a sense of

<sup>1</sup>Hiram Corson : "A Primer of English Verse."

cadence and tonal finish. Rhyme, then, we must regard as the *cadence-correspondence* of verse.

The next greatest factor in the melody of verse is color-toning, which is an interplay of vowel-effects—or tonal interrelation—enriching the general cadence. By a certain coördination of thought, the concept of one sound seems to draw to itself cognate, or related sounds which chime harmoniously with it.

Keats is easily the greatest colorist in English verse, but there are others whose song is full of rich effects. At the present day this beautiful concomitant of verse seems rather neglected. Verse indifferently toned will leave upon the ear a sense of bareness, of crudity, often of cacophony.

We find other factors of melody, closely related to the foregoing, in alliteration and onomatopœia—alliteration being of itself more or less onomatopœic in effect. Alliteration plays usually upon consonants, but need not necessarily do so. In this line:

“The league-long roller thundering on the reef?”

we get, just from the sound of the words, a vivid sense of the sweep of the great mid-ocean surges hurling themselves against the ragged crags.

Again in these lines:

“And moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmur of innumerable bees,”

the incomparable blending of liquid alliteration with rich verse-toning imparts a sense of warm and dreamy peace.

Dissonant alliteration also has its place:

“The bare black cliff clanged round him”

connotes exactly the harsh impression intended.

In a certain class of poem wonderful cadence-effects may be achieved with repetends and refrains, but these are easily liable to abuse and should be employed with a sure artistry.

We cannot afford to dispense with any factor for the enrichment of verse; we need to study all of them. Be sure that the mind saturated with *all* forms of this varied music will inevitably evolve that vehicle best suited to the expression of the informing thought.

It is not the intention of this paper to deal with the Impressionism of the day which seems to have invaded all the arts. Far be it from me to say that it has not added some notes to the gamut of color or sound. Very likely it has introduced a fresh stimulus—

and it is quite true that art grows formal and stale unless it be stirred from time to time by new impulses—but in verse its danger lies in its tendency to blur the purity of outline, and it invites to slovenliness of technique and to amorphousness.

We have always to remember that the artist, quite as much as the artisan, is a *workman*, and if he be not master of his tools, even as the carpenter or plumber, he is not likely to do an acceptable job. The boys of the Italian Renaissance began their apprenticeship at a very early age—sometimes as young as eight years—the result being that before adolescence was reached they were completely saturated with the atmosphere of their art, and the technical mastery of their great teachers. As their own wings grew, and they launched themselves into the empyrean of individual expression, they did not have to struggle with their media. It is to this superb and fundamental drill that we owe a Leonardo, a Titian, a Raphael, a Michelangelo.

The same is true of literature. In the great Elizabethan age we find a similar intrinsic impulse governing among the literary masters of that day and focusing in the greatest of them all. Shakespeare was a many-sided man. He was a Nature lover, a man of the world, a philosopher, a romancer; but above and before all, he was a *great artist*. His workmanship, his artistry was superlative; and it is by virtue of this artistry rather than by his humanism, his philosophy or his talent for a good story, that he has endured through the centuries and come down to us fresh, vital, and convincing—a perennial joy to all lovers of great art.

If we look down the vistas of past literature we shall discover one fact, that the poets who have survived have always been primarily great artists. The thought alone, however great, is not enough. It needs to be greatly clothed upon. Plenty of other men, contemporary with these, have had great thoughts, but, because of inadequate expression, have slipped into that limbo which inevitably engulfs imperfection.

We too can study to make ourselves true and intrinsic artists, even if not Shakespeares. We may learn by careful study to mold our thought into a vital music and symmetry, and so, standing upon the mount of vision:

“Catch

Upon the burning lava of a song,

The full-veined, heaving, double-breasted age.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

## THE WIFE OF MOZART : CONSTANZE WEBER

By J.-G. PROD'HOMME

TOWARDS the end of the year 1777 the youthful Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart alighted at Mannheim, the most musical town of Germany, whose geographical location on the banks of the Rhine made it an almost obligatory stopping-place for all those musicians of central Europe who were on the way to seek their fortune in Paris or at the court of Versailles.

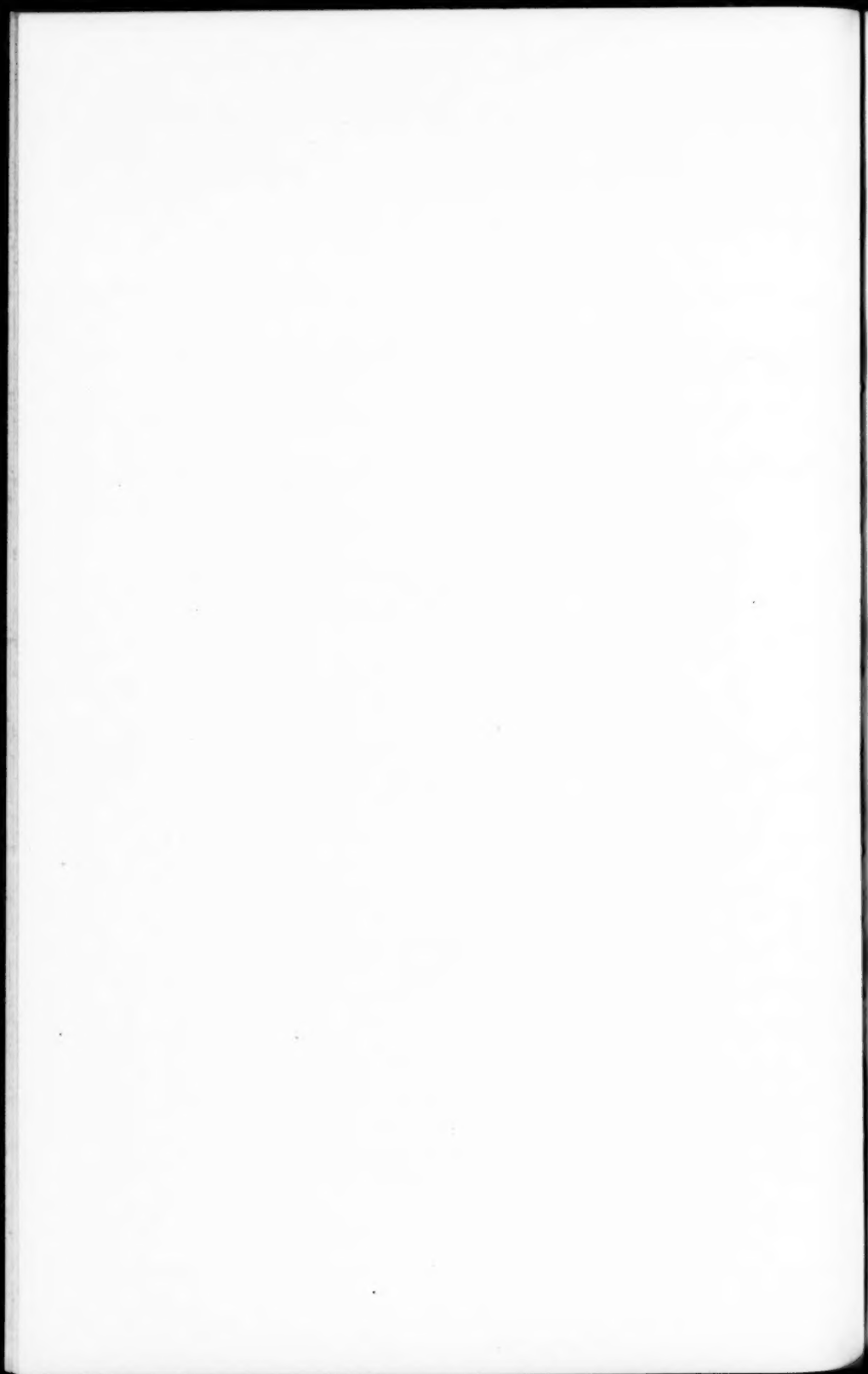
Now nearly twenty-one years of age, Mozart had hitherto always travelled, as a child or youthful prodigy, in company with his father Leopold; this time he departed from Salzburg with his mother, a good, rather unpractical woman, who was to succumb in Paris the year following to a pulmonary disease (or typhus). The two travellers had stopped over in Munich from Sept. 24 to Oct. 11, and then in Augsburg, the cradle of the Mozart family (where the young maestro made the agreeable acquaintance of a pretty cousin, Maria Anna Mozart—the Basle or Nannerl of his correspondence), arriving at the court of the Prince-Palatine, Carl Theodor, on October the 30th. While awaiting his imminent succession to the Electorship of Bavaria, this amiable prince, fond of pomp and display after the fashion of Versailles, reigned at Mannheim under the thumb of his confessors, his mistresses, and his favorites. In this town of "ringing tone" (rightly so-called) there was music-making in all quarters. "Here one is bathed in the delights of music," wrote Klopstock. And Mozart inspired in great draughts these delights, whereof Salzburg had not been prodigal. It was here that he became acquainted with the Cannabich family, Abbé Vogler, the composer Holzbauer, Wieland (the poet of *Oberon*), the oboist Ramm, the hornist Franz Lang, the elderly singer Anton Raaff, the composer Winter, and also of the Webers, a family of indigent artists or artists *in spe*, into which he was to enter after various mischances.

Sentimental and easily inflammable, young Mozart, freed for the first time from paternal surveillance strict to the verge of finality, plunged light-heartedly into this full tide of musicians of both sexes, of actors and actresses—no new world for him, but one with which he had never mingled so freely. The wife of the



CONSTANZA MOZART

1781



violinist Franz Anton Wendling (at whose house he first found lodgings), Elisabeth, was a singer; the wife of his brother Johann Baptist was the actress Dorothea Wendling, "the Melpomene of the Golden Age of Mannheim"; their young daughter Augusta (Gustl) was of Mozart's age. To his father Mozart wrote:

The daughter (Gustl), who for a time was the Elector's mistress, played very nicely. Afterwards I played. I was in a mood so admirable that I cannot describe it. I played everything without notes, and then three duets with violin that I had never seen and whose authors I had never heard of. Everybody was so pleased that I had to kiss the women. This was not so bad when it came to the daughter. For she is no scarecrow. (Letter of Nov. 8, 1777.)

Quite unsolicited, he composed French chansons and an Italian aria for these ladies, who were "perfectly crazy" over them. At the Cannabichs, there was another dynasty of musicians.

Miss Rose, who is fifteen [this Mozart rectifies in a postscript, making her only thirteen], is a very sweet and pretty young girl; she is very sensible for her age, and serious [he hastens to add]. She is sober-minded, does not talk much, but when she does talk, it is gracefully and amiably. Yesterday she once more gave me indescribable pleasure. She played my sonata very well, indeed. The Andante, which ought not to go fast, she plays with all possible feeling. But she plays it very well, too.

Mozart dedicated to Rose Cannabich this sonata in C (No. 290 in the catalogue of M. de Saint-Foix and Wyzewa); he remarks further that the Andante "is quite in keeping with her character; as is the Andante, so is she" (letter of Dec. 6, 1777).

Among some fifteen works dating from Mannheim, he composed, about Feb. 24, a recitative and aria for soprano on lines from the *Olimpiade* of Metastasio ("Alcandro lo confesso . . . No so d'onde viene") intended for Aloysia Weber, a rising young singer, whose sister Constanze was to become, four years later, Mozart's wife.

Wolfgang's intimacy with the Weber family probably began early in 1778, as he writes his father about them for the first time on Jan. 17. The head of the family, Fridolin, came from the Black Forest (he was born at Zell in Belgium, in 1733). Formerly the overseer, like his father, of the manorial estate of Schönau, he married in 1756, at Freiburg in the Breisgau, Cäcilie Stamm of Mannheim, where he established himself towards 1765; in fact, we find him inscribed at this date as a bass singer in the Electoral Kapelle. Besides this, he was a copyist of music. His brother Franz Anton (1734-1822), an officer, and after that a musician

and impresario, was the father of Carl Maria von Weber, the illustrious composer of *Der Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, who was therefore the cousin-in-law of Mozart.

The children of Fridolin and Cäcilie, four daughters, were living in 1778—Josepha, born at Zell in 1758; Aloysia, born about 1760; Constanze, born at Freiburg in 1762; and Sophie, born five years later at Mannheim. It was given to Aloysia to captivate the young Salzburger immediately, and to inspire an ardent passion in his breast—his first *grande passion*, which endured until the day when, returning from Paris, he discovered that the young singer was merely a heartless coquette.

Despite the reticences in his letters when speaking of the Webers, Leopold divined the situation; his son was in love, and when he detailed the romantic and extravagant projects that ran in his head (he spoke of making a tour with Aloysia, she as singer, he as composer, while the elder sister, Josepha, the future Queen of Night in *The Magic Flute*, would be very useful, "because she knows how to cook, besides!"), Leopold expressed skepticism and hastened his son's departure for Paris. Mozart had woven into his song "that sweet emotion, that strange fear which agitates my breast, which courses through my veins," whereof the poet of the *Olimpiade* speaks.

Tearing himself away from the seductions of Mannheim, on March 14 he took the diligence which bore him in nine days and a half to Paris. Kind Fridolin Weber, who had done him many a good turn by copying his music, begged him to accept as a souvenir some music-paper and a set of Molière's works with the following inscription: *Ricevi, amico, le opere di Molière, in segno di gratitudine. Qualche volta, ricordati da me.*—This injunction was superfluous.

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We shall pass over this sojourn in Paris, which was not happy: all that Mozart gained from it was the performance of a symphony and an overture at the Concert Spirituel in the Tuileries, and of the *Petits Riens*, a ballet by Noverre, at the Opéra, whose composer remained anonymous until 1872. Then the death of his mother on July the 3rd left him alone, at the mercy of his compatriot Grimm (Baron Grimm), who, although inviting him to be his guest—or rather the guest of Mme. d'Epinay in the Chaussée d'Antin—was solely bent upon starting him back to Salzburg as soon as might be. After much resistance Wolfgang consented to

begin the journey on Sept. 26, not by diligence, but "in another vehicle that goes at a walk, does not change horses, and takes ten days" to get to Strasbourg. Grimm, who defrayed the expense of the trip, doubtless thought that his young and maladroit compatriot had already cost him dear enough, for he had been obliged to lend him 15 louis by dribblets during his stay in Paris.

Wolfgang had not ceased writing to his friends the Webers, but of all this correspondence only two letters are extant, one to Fridolin, the other to Aloysia (July 29 and 30); very long letters, wherein he tells father and daughter of his desire to have them come to Paris for the winter of 1779-80, giving them, with sufficiently comical assurance, all the good advice that occurred to him. Meanwhile, in a mysterious tone, he asks his father's permission not to inform him of his plans until the time should be ripe:—"You should know, for your peace of mind, that this concerns only myself; it affects your situation neither for the better nor the worse."

After a halt at Nancy and a stay of almost a month at Strasbourg, caused in part by floods which prevented crossing the Rhine, Wolfgang, turning his back forever on France, returned alone to Mannheim (Nov. 6). The Webers had left that town; they were in Munich, where Count Seeau, the intendant,<sup>1</sup> had engaged Aloysia for the German theatre at a salary of 600 florins; also the father, as prompter, with a stipend of 400 plus 200. In the former capital, abandoned by the court, only some belated individuals were left; here Mozart found Mme. Cannabich, who offered him a lodging. Being no less cordially welcomed by certain earlier acquaintances, he delayed still another month, receiving letter after letter from his father. In one, dated Nov. 23, Leopold thus admonishes him:

There are two things that occupy your thoughts to the exclusion of all sensible reflection. The first and principal one is your love for Mlle. Weber, to which I have no objection, whatever. I had none at the time when her father was poor. Why should I have any now, when she can be your providence instead of your being hers? I must assume that her father knows of your love, as everyone in Mannheim does.

On Christmas eve Wolfgang arrived, by short stages, at Munich. Here, he again met his Aloysia, but alas! the young

<sup>1</sup>The Elector of Bavaria, Joseph Maximilian III, son of Emperor Carl VI, having died without issue at Munich on Dec. 30, the Elector-Palatine Carl Theodor von Sulzbach, reigning at Mannheim since 1743, had been called to succeed him. The court, by decree of Aug. 24, 1778, was removed to Munich. Count Seeau, intendant of theatrical performances, had been appointed on April 13, 1756. He held this position forty-six years.

singer, far from welcoming him with joyful alacrity, was cool, indifferent, perhaps haughty, toward this young man, who was doubtless jovial, but rather callow (it must be confessed), and whom Paris itself had not succeeded in polishing. Did she not make fun of him, and of his red coat, the livery of musicians at that period?

Though deeply hurt by this unexpected turn of events, he presented a bold front, and stayed with the Webers until his departure. While there he composed, or finished, a second aria for soprano whose words are borrowed from the Italian libretto of *Alceste*, "Popoli di Tessaglia," preceded by the recitative "Io non chiedo eterni." Then he addressed himself—to his little Augsburg cousin, inviting her to come to him and accompany him to Salzburg, where he arrived on Jan. 16 or 17, after an absence of fifteen months. Next day he was appointed organist of the Cathedral and concertmeister at court—positions which he accepted only with the secret intention of giving them up at the earliest opportunity.

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It was written in the book of fate that Mozart should marry a daughter of Fridolin Weber. Continuing its westward course, the copyist's family finally settled in Vienna in 1779, where Mozart rejoined them—never again to be separated.

While he was at Munich the following winter to bring out his opera *Idomeneo*, his master, the archbishop of Salzburg, Count Hieronymus von Colloredo, ordered him to join him in Vienna. Mozart chose the northern route via Simbach and Linz, not reaching Vienna till March 16. It was undoubtedly his double purpose never to set foot again in his native town, which he abhorred, and once for all to throw off paternal tutelage. On May 2, before he had notified his master of his resignation, and even previous to the tempestuous interview with him at the moment of the final rupture, he removed from the Deutsches Haus where he had lodgings, and took up his abode in the house where the Webers were living, called Zum Auge Gottes, near the square known to the Viennese as "am Peter." On June 9, 1781, he wrote to his father, "I will have nothing more to do with Salzburg; I hate the archbishop frantically." And he kept his word.

The Weber family had come to Vienna subsequent to the engagement of the forgetful Aloysia for the Imperial Opera, an engagement due to the protection of Count Andreas Hadik,

Minister of War. The month after this, Fridolin, now a simple seller of tickets instead of prompter, died suddenly (Oct. 23, 1779). A year later, Aloysia married the actor and amateur painter Joseph Lange (1751-1831), who had lost his first wife, the actress Anna Maria Elisabeth Schindler. Mozart, in a letter of June 9, 1781, speaks of Aloysia with a certain bitterness.

This girl [he says] was a burden for her parents so long as she could earn nothing for herself. Hardly had the time arrived when she might have shown her parents gratitude (N.B. her father died before she had earned a kreutzer here), when she left her mother, attached herself to a play-actor, married him—and her mother has not *so much* from her.

Although Mozart, with the rancor of a discarded suitor, paints the picture dark, the situation of the Webers—the mother and four daughters—was not brilliant at this time. But Cécilie was a sensible and resourceful woman; even before her daughter's début she obtained from the pay-department of the theatre an advance of 900 florins—a considerable sum, with the aid of which she established herself as a renter of furnished rooms. Having thus gained an assured subsistence, she set about marrying off her daughters. The conditions she imposed on her first son-in-law were, firstly, the repayment to the theatre of the advance of 900 florins accorded to Aloysia, and secondly, a yearly allowance of 700 florins for herself. Joseph Lange, a man of distinction, and no such mediocrity as Mozart would have us believe (they afterwards entered into very cordial relations), accepted, and in his memoirs he states that he always paid his mother-in-law's allowance regularly.

Mozart arrived in Vienna six months after Aloysia's marriage. Mother Weber saw in him the same naïve young man she had known in Mannheim and Munich, and readily discerned how she might use him to her profit. She opined that, after all, this musician of marvellous talent, that she so well appreciated, might be no bad match for one of her daughters—for Constanze, for example, whose vocal accomplishments were less salient than those of her elder sisters. He had just produced an opera at Munich; besides, his recognized virtuosity as pianist and violinist<sup>1</sup> might assure him not only fame, but fortune. To catch this solitary, maladroit, timid young man, who only after being driven to

<sup>1</sup>Mozart had reaped applause at court in the concerts given by his master, the Elector-Archbishop of Salzburg, and before the general public—for instance, on April 3, at the Kärntnertheater. "When I think," so he wrote his father on April 8-16, "that I may have to leave Vienna without carrying away at least 1000 florins, it grieves me to the heart! It seems that I, on account of an evil-disposed prince who maltreats me daily for a measly 400 gulden, must fling a thousand gulden to the dogs!" (April 11, 1781.)

desperation had broken with a father who had guided his every step since childhood, was mere play for this crafty dame. Mozart, in his letters to his father—the replies to which were unhappily destroyed by Constanze—ingenuously confirms it; his temperament, he writes, is inclined to a quiet family life rather than to disorder.

I, who from early youth have never been used to look after my things, such as underclothes and suits, I can think of nothing I need more than a wife. I assure you, that I often spend money unnecessarily because I don't look after anything. I am quite convinced that I should do better than at present. And how many useless expenses are done away with! One has others instead, true enough; but one foresees them and can provide for them, and, in a word, one leads a regular life. To my mind a bachelor lives only half a life—my mind being what it is. I can't help it. I have thought it over long enough; I shall always think the same. (Dec. 15, 1781.)

In these lines one plainly hears the echo of his conversations with his future mother-in-law. From the recollections of one of his sisters-in-law we learn with what simplicity, what familiarity, he spent hours in Madame Weber's kitchen listening to the proudest narrations, the most insignificant gossip of the house and the neighborhood.

Leopold Mozart had soon become aware of what was going on; since Mannheim he had felt more and more how his son was growing away from him—partly by his own fault, his obstinacy in treating him always like a child. So he commences with a veiled command to leave the house Zum Auge Gottes and the Webers. "Until I am able to find good, cheap and well-situated lodgings," answers Wolfgang, "I shall not move." (July 13, 1781.) Twelve days later comes the admission, still very evasive, of his love for Constanze, though he denies, with a considerable lack of candor, any intention of marrying:

Even if I could at this moment insure a fortune by marriage, I could not possibly lend myself to it, because I have quite other plans in my head. God did not give me my talent for me to hitch it to a wife, and so squander my young life in idleness.

And on Sept. 5 he dates his letter from his new room Am Graben, No. 1175 (now No. 8).

The Misses Weber, being under age, had a guardian by the name of Thorwart—later von Thorwart—then comptroller of accounts at the National Theatre in Vienna; a man with the soul of an upstart lackey, the right-hand man of Count Franz Orsini-Rosenberg, director of the court theatres. As a practical woman,

Frau Weber, on Thorwart's advice, thought it best to present an agreement to Mozart, who signed it impulsively. Its exact tenor is not known to us, but according to what he told his father about it on Dec. 22, 1781, he engaged himself to marry Constanze Weber within three years; in case he should change his mind, he was to make a yearly payment of 300 florins.

Nothing in the world could have been easier for me to write, for I knew that I should never forsake her; otherwise, I should be very glad to get rid of her for 300 gulden. And Constanze, as I know her, would be too proud to sell herself. But what did the heavenly girl do when her guardian left? She asked her mother to give her the contract, and said to me, "Dear Mozart, I need no written assurance from you. I believe your word without!"—and tore up the paper. This act made my dear Constanze still dearer to me. (Dec. 15, 1781.)

This attempted imposture was known in the places frequented by Mozart, and carried by word of mouth as far as Salzburg. Whereupon Wolfgang, in reply to the paternal admonitions, enumerated all the qualities of his future wife (Dec. 15). A month later, he took up the defense of Thorwart and Frau Weber; had not his father written him that they ought to be sentenced to sweep the streets, chained together, and bearing a script with the words "Seducers of Youth"? In March he sent presents to Salzburg: a snuffbox, a watch-chain for his father, and for Maria Anna two bonnets after the latest Viennese fashion, the work of the hands of his dear Constanze. Constanze herself paid tribute to her future sister-in-law in the form of a heart pierced by an arrow, "which will best please my sister," writes Wolfgang. On April 20, she even ventured to write to her. Finally, after numerous little scenes staged by Frau Weber or the guardian, Mozart married Constanze at St. Stephen's on August the 4th, 1782. The paternal consent, solicited for some weeks beforehand, arrived the day after, accompanied by wishes for their happiness which Leopold could not well escape addressing to the newly wed pair. Frau Weber now had only two daughters to marry off, the oldest and the youngest.

The following week the Opera gave the first representation of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, wherein the heroine bears the name of Mozart's wife; a charming operetta written with juvenile verve—the inspiration of a lover who found himself but once outdone by his pen; "With the best will in the world," observed Weber, "he could not write a second *Entführung*."

Constanze Weber, born Jan. 6, 1763, at Freiburg im Breisgau, was not yet twenty years old.

She is not ugly, and yet anything but beautiful. Whatever of beauty she has, lies in two little black eyes and a fine figure. She is not witty, but possesses enough good commonsense to fulfill her duties as wife and mother. She has no expensive tastes—that is all wrong; on the contrary, she is accustomed to dress plainly. For what little her mother could do for her children, she did for the other two, never for her. It is true that she likes to be dressed neatly and cleanly, but not fashionably. And most of the things a woman needs she can make for herself; and she does up her hair herself every day, knows how to keep house, has the best heart in the world. I love her, and she loves me with all her heart. Tell me, could I ask for a better wife? (Dec. 15, 1781.)

The picture that Mozart draws of Constanze Weber, quite exact as to morals, was also not flattered as to physique, and is confirmed by the portraits<sup>1</sup> of her that are still extant; a thin face, with black, piercing eyes, the hair brown and abundant, a severe, not very agreeable mien; for the rest, Constanze was apparently tall and well built. We might say with Herr Schurig, her recent biographer, that

she was not a remarkable woman. She certainly does not belong in the ranks of those brilliant personalities who, in alliance with an *homme supérieur*, find a vocation as friend, mistress, or wife. During the ten years that Constanze walked side by side with Wolfgang Amadé, Mozart—according to Arthur Schopenhauer's familiar classification—did not belong among those who *represent something*. He possessed neither money, rank, nor honors; in short, he did not dazzle the commonalty, and Constanze had no other standard at her disposal. He did not take his life tragically, pitiful as it was externally. He was not fitted to cope with reality, with *life as others know it*, with the opposition of mediocrity; he therefore contented himself with enjoying the pleasures of the passing hour. His young wife followed his example. And so these two took, as it were, no thought for the morrow. Constanze, however, always remained virtually the same, whether as Mademoiselle Weber, as Frau Musikus Mozart, or as Frau Counsellor-of-State von Nissen. She instinctively adapted herself to circumstances, to her leader and his maxims, in true womanly fashion. (Arthur Schurig, "Konstanze Mozart." Dresden, 1822, p. xi.)

A first child was born June 17, 1783, and christened Raimund (after Mozart's landlord, the Jewish baron Raimund von Wetzlar, a great amateur of music), and Leopold, like his grandfather; he lived only three months, dying on August 19th while his parents were in Salzburg; Mozart desired to present his young wife to his father and sister. This visit, prolonged to nearly three months, was a "surprise," but failed of the result that Mozart had, rather naïvely, anticipated; Leopold, whose opinions were shared by

<sup>1</sup>A portrait by her brother-in-law Lange, and another by the Danish painter Hansen, dating from 1802.

Nannerl, was, so it would appear, simply polite to his daughter-in-law.

On the way home Wolfgang stopped at Linz, at the house of Count Joseph von Thun, for whom he composed in two or three days a symphony in C major (K. 425), which was played Nov. 4. From this same period a curious document was still extant in 1800, attesting that Mozart, returning from Salzburg, was in a frame of mind so melancholy as to inspire the "Linzer Symphony," so vivacious withal; there was a drawing, an *Ecce Homo*, accompanied by a dedication in French: *Dessiné par W. A. Mozart, Linz, ce 13 novembre 1783, dédié à Mme Mozart sa épouse* [sic].

Next year, on Sept. 21, a second son arrived to replace the "poor, big, fat and dear little baby" whose loss he still lamented in a letter of Dec. 10, 1783. This second child, who was to survive him by sixty-seven years, was named Carl Thomas after his godfather Thomas von Trattern, the wealthy Viennese bookseller on the Graben, in whose house the Mozarts were then living.

When Leopold returned his children's visit, he found them domiciled, no longer in the Trattern house, but at No. 846 (now 8) of the Grosse Schülerstrasse in the second story of the Carmesina house. Recounting, with his habitual prolixity, all that he saw in Vienna, in his first letter to his daughter Nannerl (who had become Baroness Sonnenburg) Leopold writes that her brother had "a fine apartment, furnished with all the conveniences that should go with a rental of 460 florins." (Feb. 14, 1785.) He likewise took note of the fact that Wolfgang now occupied a place in the public eye, and he did not fail to repeat the compliment paid him by Haydn: "He is the greatest composer that I know either personally or by name"; such was the old master's pronouncement.

The numerous concerts to which he lent the prestige of his incomparable talent were a source of very considerable emoluments, a fact to which Leopold was keenly alive. "I think that my son, if he has no debts to pay, could now invest two thousand florins. He certainly has money, and the household is extremely economical as to eating and drinking," he remarks at another date. Alas! this happy state of things was not to last more than one or two years. And, as to economy—this ménage of Mozart's, who spent as he lived, without calculation, fell all too soon into the clutches of a chronic indebtedness. Constanze, as improvident as her husband, showed herself to be anything but a good manager, although she was not devoid of practical sense, of which she gave proof under stress of need—after she became a widow.

The year of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, on Oct. 18, 1785, she gave birth to a third son, named Leopold, who within a month fell a victim to whooping-cough. Then came a daughter (Dec. 27, 1787), who died when only a few months old, after the trip to Prague for the first performance of *Don Giovanni*. At that time Mozart was living at No. 28 Unter den Tuchlauben, his ninth domicile since his marriage; the fine apartment in the Schülerstrasse, where Leopold had been received, was then only a memory.

With Constanze, who was inclined to jealousy, Mozart visited Prague twice in 1787, and at no inconsiderable expense. But in 1789, and also in 1790, she was obliged by circumstances to let him go without her to Prague, Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin, at first in company with Prince Lichnowsky, who had invited him; then to Frankfort, whither he went to try his luck with the violinist Hofer (married to his sister-in-law Josepha since 1788) at the festivities attending the imperial coronation. The result of these two journeys was practically nil. And, while Mozart was endeavoring to earn a few ducats in Frankfort, his wife was soliciting Viennese usurers for advances on works that the publishers did not care for. The martyrdom of the closing years had begun.

A fifth child, again a daughter, was born Nov. 19, 1789, and died the same day. Mozart then was dwelling on the Judenplatz, No. 245 (now 4). At Michaelmas of that year he removed to what proved to be his last lodgings in the Kleines Hartensteinsches Haus, Rauhensteingasse 970. Here, on July 26, 1791, was born Franz Xaver Wolfgang, pianist and composer, who died in 1844.

These final years, and especially the last months, crowned by the success in extremis of *The Magic Flute*, were a period of the greatest misery and the hardest work. And Constanze, with her accustomed improvidence and negligence, had done nothing to render them easier for him who was soon to leave her, almost without warning. On the contrary, it was he who, always gay, always seemingly careless of the future and dissembling whatever anxiety he may have felt, sought to encourage his wife. For example, on his way to Berlin he wrote to his "dearest Wifey" from Dresden on April 13, 1789, at 7 o'clock in the morning:

Dearest Wifey, if I only had a letter from you now! If I were to tell you everything I do with your picture, surely you would often laugh. For instance, when I take it out of its pen, I say, "Good-morning, Stanzerl!—good-morning, scamp—scratchy-ratchy—spike-nose—little lovey, kiss and squeeze!—and when I put it in again, I let it slip in bit by bit, and keep saying ss—so—so—so! but with all the energy that this highly significant word requires, and at the last one, quickly, "Good-night, mousey! sleep well!"— Now I suppose I've written something rather

silly (for the world, at least), but for us, loving each other so tenderly, it's not so silly.

And when she has to go to Baden for her health (from 1789 to 1791), he sacrifices himself, kills himself with work, that she may rest herself, though sometimes not without reproving her for her somewhat loose behavior. While the poor fellow is exhausting himself to earn a few florins, so that he may visit her now and then in Baden, Constanze, under the pretext of taking the cure, denies herself none of the distractions offered by this watering-place frequented by the Viennese. She did not dream that this musician who was working day and night without obtaining success or official position,<sup>1</sup> like that of a Dittersdorf or a Salieri;—that this marvellous and stupendous virtuoso whose name she bore was to leave her in so short a time.—After a few days' illness he died, leaving unfinished a Requiem—his own Requiem.

In that long night of December 4-5, 1791, Constanze found by the pillow of the departed an album to which he had confided years before, after the death of his friend, the physician Sigismund von Barisani, this mournful and resigned reflection:

To-day, September the 2nd of this same year (1787), I had the misfortune to lose through death this noble man, dearest, best friend, and savior of my life, who died very unexpectedly. He is at peace! But I, we, all who knew him well, will never feel true peace until we are so happy as to rejoin him in a better world, to be separated no more.—Mozart.

She turned the leaf over, and wrote:

What you once wrote on this leaf to your friend, the same do I now, all forlorn, write to you, dearest of husbands, by me and all Europe unforgettable Mozart! You, too, are at peace—for ever at peace!

One hour after midnight of December 4-5 of this year, in his 36th year—O! all too early!—he left this good, but ungrateful, world. O God!

For eight years were we united by the tenderest, most inseparable tie here below!—O! may I soon be united with you for all eternity.

Your disconsolate wife,

Constanze Mozart, née Weber.

Vienna, Dec. 5. 1791.

She then took refuge with the family of Joseph von Bauernfeld (partner of Schikaneder, the impresario, author, actor in *The Magic Flute*), leaving it to a few friends to follow, as far as the

<sup>1</sup>Only after the death of Gluck did Mozart obtain the title of "k. k. Kapellmeister und Kammer-Compositeur," with a stipend of 800 florins annually. This formed his sole fixed source of income.

city gates, the pitiful coffin that the undertakers, its sole attendants, bore to its resting-place in a pauper's grave.

Was this from indifference, hebetude, or resignation? One can hardly understand how Mozart's young widow, stunned by his loss, could leave unvisited the grave of him she mourned.

For all that, she did not lose her head, or at least recovered rapidly from the emotion that had so agitated her. On the very morrow of the interment, December the 7th, she assisted at the official sealing of the effects in her rooms in the Rauhensteingasse; and further, on the 19th, following the inventory (which amounted to the modest sum of 592 florins, 9 kreutzer), she signed the schedule of notes paid "since the death of my husband, and for him," totalling 918 florins, 16 kreutzer.

This woman of thirty, until then flighty and thoughtless, all at once manifested practical qualities inherited from her mother, Cécilie Weber. She immediately realized the rôle she had to assume, her family being quite unable to assist her; she displayed a truly surprising activity, devoting herself to her two sons with a resolution that grew the stronger, so to speak, the more she realized that she had lived ten years beside a man of genius; a frame of mind confirmed by the world about her.

On December the 11th she addressed herself to Emperor Leopold, apprising him (perhaps at the dictation of Thorwart or some other adviser) that, as Mozart had not been ten years in his service, she could not claim a pension; but, "to give a faint idea of her extremely difficult situation," she added:

(1) Her deceased husband never had the good fortune here in Vienna to await a favorable opportunity which would have permitted him to show his talent to the world in such a light as to assure him a better subsistence, and for that reason he was not in a position to dispose of any property.

(2) True, it would have been very easy for him to make his way abroad and raise his family to affluence, had he accepted the offers so frequently made, and not considered it his greatest honor to serve the All-highest Court here.

(3) The fact that he was still in early manhood, and the highly reasonable presumption that his extraordinary talent would enable him in good time to insure the well-being of those dependent upon him, did not allow the remotest conception of the possibility of the present situation to enter his mind. . . . He was torn from the world at the very moment when hopes for a brighter future were rising all around. For, besides the recently received announcement of his succession to the post of Kapellmeister at St. Stephen's cathedral, there arrived only a few days before his death the assurance from certain of the Hungarian nobility of an annual subscription of 1000 gulden, and from Amsterdam

the promise of a still higher yearly assignment, for which he was to compose only a few pieces exclusively for the subscribers.

The Emperor, on March 13, 1792, allowed her a pension of 266 florins, 40 kreutzer, that is, one-third of the stipend of 800 florins that Mozart was to receive from Jan. 1 preceding. Moreover, Leopold II authorized Constanze to give a benefit concert to pay the debts of the deceased, which were said to total 30,000 florins, but (so she certified) did not exceed 3000.

Having obtained satisfaction in this quarter, and bearing in mind the good impression her husband had made in Berlin, Frau Mozart now turned to the King of Prussia, Frederick William II, with the proposal, made through his envoy in Vienna, Baron von Jacobi-Kloesz, that he should acquire eight pieces of music for the sum of 800 ducats. This offer was immediately accepted by the King.

At the same time, Constanze was arranging concerts and assisting at ceremonies in honor of her departed husband. At Vienna (says Nissen, without noting the precise date) she brought out the Requiem. During the season of 1794-5 (Dec. 29 and March 31) she gave in the Court Theatre two concert-performances of *La Clemenza di Tito*; in the entr'acte of the second the youthful Beethoven, who had made his début two evenings earlier before the general Viennese public, won the plaudits of Mozart's admirers by playing the Concerto in D, which he liked best of all, and for which he composed a cadenza.

In the foregoing year, on Feb. 7, 1794, Constanze, with her son Carl, had assisted at a concert arranged in the Akademiesaal at Prague. In continuance of her apostleship, she undertook in 1796, a new tournée in the North; she again visited Prague, where she had recently entrusted young Carl to the care of her friends the Niemetscheks; made a halt in Leipzig, where she entered into relations with the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel; and then proceeded to Dresden and Berlin. This time she took along her little Wowi (Wolfgang), five years of age, who was invited, at a concert given in Prague towards the beginning of January, to sing Papageno's verselets in *The Magic Flute* to other words. The little fellow had been stood upon a table; all present were greatly moved by this exhibition. The child was left in charge of the Duschek family, while the mother pursued her journey. Subsequently the boy was confided to Niemetschek, one of the first biographers of Mozart, and remained in Prague eighteen months, together with his brother Carl, who studied from 1791 to 1797 at the gymnasium of Die Kleine Seite. Carl's appearance had been

announced for April, 1794, in the rôle of the child doomed for sacrifice, in *Axur* by Salieri; but he did not appear, and the *Neue Zeitung* of April 9 explained to its readers that Baron van Swieten, "his noble benefactor, with confidence in the spirit of the Bohemian nation, had sent him to Prague to be educated!! The children of great men belong, in a sense, to the public, and the child's instructors have too much regard for him and too great solicitude for his welfare to permit this (exhibition)."

In Berlin, at the concert given by order of the King on Feb. 28, 1796, Constanze herself sang a part in the chorus, or some minor rôle, in this same *Clemenza di Tito*, the last secular work of Mozart, which seems to have had a certain success outside the theatre. In the month of June she was again in Dresden, as the following stanza—a page of an album now in the keeping of the Mozarteum at Salzburg—testifies:

Kannst Du durch Deinen Tod  
Nichts als ein Engel werden,  
Ach, so bleibe ewig hier:  
Das bist Du schon auf Erden.

Dresden, den 21sten Juni 1796.

Zum Andenken von Deiner Freundin  
Constanze Mozart.

(If death can only make  
An angel of thee now,  
Ah, stay forever here,  
On earth an angel thou.)

Returning to Vienna, she occupied herself with bringing out the innumerable unpublished works of Mozart. She gave ("gave" is the right word, for this publication did not profit her a kreutzer) Breitkopf authority to engrave a piano-score of *Idomeneo*, and similarly authorized André, the Offenbach publisher, to print "Six grands Concertos dédiés au Prince Louis Ferdinand de Prusse," the prince-musician and friend of Beethoven, who was killed on the eve of Jena.

Of the six hundred works enumerated by the catalogues of Köchel, Wyzewa and Saint-Foix, Mozart, as we know, published only a very small number—only a score of works with opus-number, and about as many more (mostly dances) without. Of the correspondence between his widow and the Leipzig publishers, fragments of twenty-nine letters (from Oct. 2, 1796, to June 2, 1802) alone are extant. From these we learn that Constanze sends or makes over to them musical manuscripts, letters, and portraits; she also furnishes anecdotes and biographical details

which appear, as edited by Rochlitz, in the *Allgemein Musikalische Zeitung* published by Breitkopf. One letter of July 2, 1802, is particularly interesting for what it tells about the Requiem, around which the well-known legend had already grown up. Constanze writes:

From the review of the Requiem in the *Musikalische Zeitung* I see what doubts still exist concerning the apportionment between Mozart and Süssmeyer of participation in that work. I alone am in a position to explain whatever is enigmatical in the matter, and if this explanation is of value for yourself, the reviewer, or your future biographer, it is entirely at your service.

I shall begin by telling you that everything, up to the commencement of the *Dies irae*, is by Mozart alone, and that this manuscript of his is in the possession of the anonymous individual who gave the commission, as I myself saw last year. All the rest done by, and therefore written by, Mozart himself is in my keeping and is my property. Süssmeyer was so generous as to give it to me unexpectedly some time ago; I had no idea that it must be in his hands. This manuscript goes to the end of *Confutatis*. A considerable portion of the inner parts, and here and there perhaps somewhat more, was not written by Mozart; but all not by Mozart is encircled by pencil markings, and, besides, would be easily recognizable by a handwriting expert. Here the reviewer would find confirmation of his keen-witted remark that a certain passage (I think in the *Tuba mirum*) was not intended by Mozart for the flutes, but for the trombone.

If you can, as aforesaid, use this copy, I shall be very glad to lend it to you. I would only ask you to tell Herr Traeg, or someone else, to come to me for it and later to bring it back to me, so that I need not pay postage.

I think you will find the inner parts different from those in the copy I gave you before. I also have to inform you that Süssmeyer, who evidently wished to give me only Mozart's work, and thought it his duty, in a sense, to give me only that, also gave me the *Sanctus*, in which not a note or a word is in Mozart's handwriting. It would probably be worth while to investigate both points, but I wrote him unavailingly a long time ago about the latter point, and, as I seldom see him, have not spoken with him about it.

N. B. André's vocal score was doubtless made from this copy; he had borrowed it from me.

In 1799 this same Offenbach publisher, Johann Anton André (who had just succeeded his father Johann, who died on June the 18th), purchased the greater part of the Mozart manuscripts, put in order by Abbé Stadler, for the sum of 1000 carolins, or 16,000 florins, i. e., about 33,000 francs; an acquisition which was to promote the interests of the firm considerably.

As to the idea of writing or having written a biography of the master, this did not occur to Constanze until long thereafter,

when she had retired to Salzburg (after ten years spent in Copenhagen) with her husband, the Danish diplomat Nicholas Nissen. Their marriage, effected in 1809, was merely the "regularization" of a situation which had existed in fact for ten years. There was nothing romantic about the liaison of Constanze with Nissen; while awaiting the success of the negotiations she was conducting with the works of her first husband, Constanze, like her mother before her, had recourse to renting a portion of her apartment for the sake of a regular income, and thus it happened that she received, as a boarder, one of the attachés of the Danish embassy in Vienna. Nissen was 37 years old when he took lodgings with her, in 1797 probably. He soon became interested in this widow, a few years younger than himself, occupying himself with her children, to whom he became a second father before becoming their father-in-law. When Nissen, ennobled in 1807 and made a chevalier of the Danebrog Order, was recalled to Denmark, the marriage was consummated (1809)—a "rational" marriage, and one possibly better suited to Constanze Weber than her union with Mozart.

Her eldest son, Carl, now a young man, had been in Italy since 1796. He lived in Leghorn until 1805, getting a mercantile training and making a serious study of music. At Milan, where he settled later as a subordinate functionary in the Austrian finances, he continued his studies under the composer and theorist Asioli. His mother wrote him, in the first letter that has been saved for us (from Vienna, March 5, 1806):

I have known for a long time that music could not be or remain indifferent to you. Whether you have studied or will study it as diligently as you ought, I do not know. This you must know better than I. So I leave everything to your judgment, and certainly will not dissuade you; only always bear in mind my heartfelt injunction, namely, that none of Mozart's sons can afford to be mediocre, and so incur the risk of shame rather than glory. If you have thought it all over, and consider yourself equal to taking up this difficult vocation, I am quite satisfied. Now be diligent, doubly diligent! I must tell you, besides, that you have a formidable rival in your brother—though we don't tell him so in order not to make him proud and to make him work harder. In fact, it would hurt me to see one brother favored above the other. But if both of you are honorable and great, my joy will be all the greater.

Carl very wisely renounced composition towards 1810, not feeling it to be his sphere. Recalling early memories he wrote on March the 4th, 1856, to Ad. Popelka, a merchant and the owner of Villa Bertramka where he (Carl) had spent part of his childhood at the Duscheks':

My mother had peremptorily decided that not I, but my younger brother, then not quite two years old, should become a musician—a decision that did not suit me at the time, but with which I was well satisfied after reaching maturer insight resting on the conviction that the sons of a father who had greatly distinguished himself, should never embrace the same vocation, for they, even if possessed of greater talent than I felt to be mine, could never satisfy the demands that would be made on them. The same conviction unhappily took root in the mind of my dear brother, now deceased, after attaining maturity, making him discontented and distrustful of his own talent, which was really beyond the ordinary, thus embittering and possibly shortening his life.<sup>1</sup>

Constanze, therefore, lost no opportunity of rearing her second son, whom she now kept at home with her, in a musical atmosphere. We know that Carl Amenda, an intimate friend of Beethoven's towards 1800, was his teacher, besides Czerny. Somewhat later a letter from his mother addressed to Carl (Jan. 30, 1807) apprises him that every Monday they have good music at her house:

The two Pixis brothers of Mannheim, the elder being a violin-pupil of Viotti, the younger at the pianoforte; above all Herr Seidler of Berlin, a truly remarkable violinist, who has just come from Paris and is said to be noways inferior to the famous Rode. You ought to hear them play your father's quartets! What wouldn't I give if you could hear them here at home! They are very nice people. All of them already give public concerts. . . . Your brother goes now to Salieri and Hummel. Both are very fond of him and kind to him. I am only afraid that he will not profit by them: as he ought, for it is not always good for one to have too much help. . . . Now he has three great masters, Salieri, Albrechtsberger, and Hummel. If I could give you only one of these men, how happy I should be, for such you will not find in all Italy. Pray do me the kindness and ask in a letter (for you know that Wowi still has the three great masters), whether he is really industrious and tries to profit by their teaching, which he can do only by composing industriously; and ask him how many pieces he finishes writing in a year, and whether he is training himself thoroughly in instrumentation.

Wolfgang Xaver (Wowi) gave his first concert at 13 in 1804, realizing 1700 florins. Having finished his education in 1804, he entered the family of the Polish count Victor Rowanowski at Podkamien, near Lemberg, in the capacity of music-master, his salary being 1000 florins plus board and lodging. Three years

<sup>1</sup>Carl Mozart died Oct. 31, 1858, in the neighborhood of Milan, where he lived on the modest pension granted him by the Austrian exchequer. In June the French consul had visited him in the name of the committee of the Authors and Composers of Paris, to inform him that the society had remitted him the sum of 8000 francs as royalties on recent representations of *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Théâtre Lyrique. Carl Mozart, then an old man of 88, was moved to tears; he could only say: "La France a toujours l'initiative des pensées généreuses."

later he assumed a similar position with chamberlain Janiszewski, in Lemberg itself. Resembling his father, whose memory weighed heavily upon him—for he had genuine musical talent, and felt what a heritage of genius was his to bear—he discovers the same witty, jovial vein, the good humor, the tinge of melancholy, too, in the few letters to his elder brother that have been preserved. In the second, of March 30, 1809, he indicates his own musical predilections, which tended towards the sentimental *Lied* then in vogue:

I have not studied singing, because my voice has always been too weak; nevertheless, I like best of all to write for the voice. I would rather (between ourselves) hear a "Selbst Engel Gottes weinen" or "Abend ist's" of our father's than a masterly instrumented but unemotional symphony. I love to write passionate songs.

The following year he writes on Nov. 10 (1810) from Smolanyka, the winter residence of Count Baworowski, telling sorrowfully of the moral isolation in which he lives and his obsessing doubts as to his musicianship:

My salary was large enough two years ago; but now, with the ducat at 30 Gulden, it has shrunk very sensibly. But (you will ask), does not your composing bring in anything? Yes, dear brother, it would bring me in a good deal, but I am composing—nothing. The sad, lonely life I have to lead here blunts my senses so that I often have to torture myself for days before I can produce the least little thing. One has a fine chance to study here, and for that I employ the greater part of my time. Just now I am studying Kirnberger's "Reinen Satz." In the two years I have spent here I have had but few cheerful moments. True, I want for nothing, am among good people, and therefore, as a man, could ask for no more acceptable diet. But as an artist? As an artist I can profit little in a village, in a country, where I am perhaps the first in my profession. If you think me oversensitive, or vain, I beg you to come here and convince yourself.

What melancholy lies in these last words!—

Constanze, however, did not discourage her other son from making music. In 1807, she advised him to follow the counsels of Weigl, who was about to leave for Milan, and to return to Vienna to work under him.

Now try to learn from the Germans, after listening to the Italians four years. . . .

Like you, I am glad that in Italy they are at last beginning to appreciate Mozart's music, and all the more because this must animate you and your brother to still greater industry in this profession. Now I do not know of a single nook in all Europe where they do not study and admire your father's works.

A year later she visited Weigl on his return from Italy; the composer opined that the son of Mozart was "very diligent, but makes very hard work of music." So he ought to come back to Vienna rather than remain with Asioli, who was not sufficiently thorough. Weigl promised him a place in the theatre, and that he should not want for pupils (letter of Sept. 14, 1808). It appears, besides, that Carl had confided to his mother that he intended to get married; indeed, a few lines further along, she writes him:

I only beg you, in case you can make a wealthy marriage, never to depend on your wife. You must always try to earn your own living, and not to live at the mercy of a woman. I think no man of honor can do that without assuredly being very unhappy. I hope you understand me. It is ever so hard to make oneself so clear in a letter as I could wish; at least, I cannot.

But political events supervened to upset Austria. The war with France began the following Spring. The Nissen family, who had lived in expectation of being called to Denmark, fled to Presburg during the battle of Wagram, the prelude to the taking of Vienna. Constanze complains of high living-expenses, and describes to Carl the various objects—relics of his father—that she has collected to send him in Milan; among other things a box of music that their friend Bridi, a merchant in Rovereto, had sent her. "To these I add all the fugues of Bach and Händel. You could learn much from them."—There was a time, as we know, when Constanze had encouraged Mozart to write fugues in the style of Bach, and that Mozart, while working on a revision of Händel's oratorios for Baron Swieten, had attended performances of the works of his two predecessors.

Returning to Vienna on Aug. 13, Constanze received a visit from a French musician, Rey, who brought her news of Carl. This was probably the aged Jean-Baptiste Rey (1734–1810), a former chef d'orchestre at the Opéra; he may have met Mozart in Paris in 1765 or 1778. Now (1809) he was chef d'orchestre of Napoleon's chapelle, and it was doubtless in this capacity that he had come to Vienna, despite his advanced age. "To-day all the talk is about peace," wrote Frau Nissen in the same letter; and she adds, not without a touch of pride: "Day before yesterday *Don Giovanni* was performed in German at the Schloss in Schönbrunn before his Majesty the French Emperor." This letter is dated Oct. 11; on the 14th, the Peace of Vienna was signed. Following this performance, as we know, Napoleon (who was not insusceptible to Mozart's music, although he preferred that of Cimarosa and, above all, of Paisiello), fancying that he recognized

the *Don Juan* that had been given at the Opéra since 1804, immediately applied to Paris to learn whether it was "la même musique."

On Dec. 1 Constanze tells her son that there had been "a little masquerade" at her home in celebration of her husband's birthday. Xavier had composed an air for the occasion. Nov. 27, the Emperor had returned to Vienna. At Presburg there was given, in his honor; *La Clemenza di Tito*. Early next year (Jan. 10, 1817) she sends to Milan a copy of this score costing 25 florins, and with it a copy of the overture to *Les Pyramides de Babylone*, an opera just given by Winter as a pendant to *Die Zauberflöte*.

Meantime events followed in swift succession. On Feb. 21 Constanze, still in Vienna, rejoices over the imperial wedding of Napoleon and Marie Louise; a certain curious interest attaches to this passage by reason of its disclosures of the pleasing illusions cherished by the folk of Vienna concerning this alliance.

What do you say to the happy choice of our Princess Louise? Empress of France!! Could you ever have imagined such a fortunate turn of events? No, none of us could. Everybody is wild with joy. One sees only cheerful faces. Nobody walks on his feet, but on his head. In short, we are as if intoxicated with sheer delight over the affair. Even our Empress, who, as you know, was in poor health, forgets her pain and is well—so much so that she insists on being present at all festivities and takes so lively an interest in it all, that everything belonging to and bought for the trousseau of the Princess has to go through her hands. This kindly, tender-hearted Empress and mother, whom everyone adores, often makes me weep tears of joy over this. God grant her enduring health for her noble heart.

On the 3rd of March, the Prince of Neuchâtel arrives to escort the happy bride. Illumination of the city and all the suburbs; then free theatre, free masked balls, and heaven knows what all. You will read all about it in the newspapers. I myself am so bewildered that I can't write you everything. God grant that with this virtuous, beautiful princess all hearts may be so changed that Austria will never again be at war. Then her virtue will be rewarded. May she, through her beauty and virtue so reconcile the great Napoleon with her father, that the closest friendship may be formed between them. Austria can thus once more be happy. Amen! (Letter of Feb. 24, 1810.)

But three months after these festivities not everything was for the best. In a letter whereby Constanze informs her son that she had sent him his father's pianoforte (May 7, 1810), she still complains of the high cost of living, in conclusion congratulating herself on having become Frau von Nissen:

Living is unbelievably dear. . . . I can't understand how poor folks can manage to exist. And it is a fact that the mortality among the poor is very great. I can't bear to speak of it at length, for it hurts

me, and unhappily I am unable to help. If I had remained a widow, I must have died of hunger long ago. But in this the dear Lord has helped me, as He always did; and now I shall be glad to leave this place, where formerly I was so glad to be.

Nissen himself announced their departure for Denmark, anticipated for many months, and on June 13 he sent in an accounting with Carl, calling his attention to the fact that (thanks to himself implied) his mother had not only been able to pay her debts, but had amassed a small capital for the sons of Mozart.

The Nissens made a stay in Prague, where Constanze met some old friends, and arrived in Copenhagen Sept. 14. They were to dwell there for ten years, the former attaché of the Viennese embassy being appointed censor of the political press and actual Counsellor of State. Thenceforward, Constanze signed herself "Mrs. Counsellor of State." From a financial point of view their ménage, if we may believe her confidential communications to her son in a letter of Dec. 29, was not specially brilliant—1200 Reichsthaler per annum. "So we live as best we can, very sparingly, have no domestics, but only one old charwoman, and eat with the restaurant-keeper who lives in our house." And Nissen adds in a postscript that postage on a letter from Copenhagen to Milan costs two rixdalers (i. e., about two francs).

In the correspondence between mother and son there now occurs an hiatus of sixteen years. Constanze and her children were dispersed, separated by hundreds of leagues, in Italy, Poland, and Denmark. Wowi, then nearing his thirtieth year, was the first to see his mother again after a separation of eleven years. Having quitted Lemberg in 1819, he made a concert-tour at the instigation of his friends, visiting Warsaw, Königsberg, Danzig, Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden, Prague and Stuttgart, and being everywhere received with manifestations of peculiar interest and sympathy. He then went to Copenhagen, after which he traversed all Central Europe and paid a visit to his brother in Milan. At the home of Gen. Bubna he made the acquaintance of Stendhal. Proceeding to Rome, he returned in March, 1820, to Prague, where he gave several concerts, thereafter going back to Lemberg.

In this same year von Nissen, having retired, returned to Germany with his wife, having to take the cure at Gastein. Salzburg, which he visited on the way, pleased him; everything there reminded him of Mozart, and he decided to make it his permanent abode. Installed in the house of the court apothecary (Hofapotheke, Ludwig Viktor-Platz, at present No. 17), von Nissen began to work assiduously on the biography of his wife's first

husband. This was in 1821, and the work was not entirely completed when death overtook him on March 24, 1826. Two months previous his wife, writing to Carl, describes him as "seated night and day, buried in a heap of books and periodicals so that I can hardly see him. Certainly, a champion of Mozart like Nissen would be difficult to find, and I again implore you to help him if you can, for you should feel that all that he is doing with so great labor is done solely for you and your brother."

On this work, which Nissen left unfinished, was founded the "Biographie W. A. Mozarts, nach Original-briefen, etc.," which appeared in 1828; an official biography, a family biography, presenting the image of Mozart that his widow wished to transmit to posterity; for Nissen had used only in part, and arbitrarily, the "heap" of important documents he had amassed, and Constanze, besides, had destroyed many of them, notably all the letters of Leopold to his son prior to his marriage, and very probably the letters of Fridolin and Aloysia Weber as well, with such feminine correspondence as certainly was not lacking among the papers of the deceased Kapellmeister. In so doing she thought the better to serve his memory, by throwing light more exclusively on his own individuality. The volume issuing from her collaboration with her second husband was, in spite of its high-flown title, merely a panegyric of the first. And it was not until our own times, that the authority of Nissen's "Mozart" was definitively demolished by Theodore de Wyzewa and Georges de Saint-Foix, with Otto Jahn to spare.

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Constanze, during her second widowhood, gave the same proofs of energy and initiative as in the days immediately following Mozart's death. "I am only a woman, but in business matters I act like a man and promptly, and I require like action of those doing business with me," she declared to the publishing firm of Mechetti, who delayed payment on 170 copies of the Biography of Mozart, by Nissen, for which they had subscribed (letter of Feb. 21, 1833). The completion, publication and sale of this work was the task to which she devoted herself unremittingly for a long time. For its final revision she applied to a physician, Dr. Feuerstein of Pirna; and the volume, adorned with lithographic portraits of Mozart, his wife, their children and their father-in-law (in his uniform and with his decorations, which latter are even sculptured on his tomb), appeared in 1828, sold on commission by

Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig and Mechetti in Vienna. It is probable that five or six hundred copies were printed of this work, which was dedicated by Constanze to Queen Fredericka of Denmark. It sold rather slowly, and in 1836 the unsold copies were made over to Breitkopf at half-price. Moreover, Constanze found difficulty (as noted above) in obtaining payment for the copies subscribed for by the Mechettis : and she was obliged to dispatch letter after letter to Feuerstein in Dresden to regain possession of the 124 copies retained by him. This unlucky Dr. Feuerstein, to whom Constanze paid (so she says) 1837 florins, died in a hospital at Dresden on Jan. 2, 1850.

In a diary which she kept with almost commercial regularity, and of which some ten years, from 1826 to 1837, are extant, Constanze reveals practically day by day her deliberations concerning this work. E. g., on Oct. 24, 1828, she wrote to Spontini in Berlin telling him of her plan to have it translated into French by Sevelinges; on Aug. 11, while her son Wolfgang is visiting her for a month at Salzburg, she receives his "dear piano" at which Mozart had so often sat to play and compose (for example *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, the Requiem, and a Free-Masonic Cantata. "How happy it makes me (she jots down immediately) is impossible for me to describe. Mozart was so fond of this piano, and so I am doubly fond of it."

In September she takes the "cure" at Gastein, and this furnishes the pretext for a prolix narration of the least happenings during her sick days : thus she writes, Dec. 5, 1830, to a Dr. Schwaan, music-master in Rostock:

As for myself, I am living with my dearest sister (Sophie Haibel) as befits my condition, bereft of Mozart and bereft of Nissen, as happily as circumstances permit. I have had two great, excellent husbands, by whom I was loved and esteemed—I may well say, adored.

To the same correspondent, for whom she manifests special regard (we know not for what reason—perhaps she knew him in Denmark), she sends numerous souvenirs of her family, manuscripts of Mozart's, portraits, etc.

Some years later, when the city of Salzburg proposed to erect a monument to the most illustrious of her sons, Constanze addressed (April 15, 1838) the Queen of Sweden, soliciting (in an epistle couched in somewhat vague French) the protection of Her Royal Majesty, so widely known as a friend of the fine arts and as a queen beloved by a great nation, who had never yielded precedence to any in the matter of recognizing merit, not in her

compatriots alone, but also in foreigners. Two years afterward (March 3, 1840) she wrote Dr. Schwaan, who had evidently become her confidant:

Perhaps you, dear friend, have also learned from the newspapers what honors I have enjoyed at the hands of the kind King of Bavaria. Indeed, I was made to come to Munich and attend the performance of *Don Giovanni*, given in honor of the Mozart family. And the affable reception by H. M. the King and the gracious Queen, both of whom welcomed me with open arms, and so overwhelmed me with marks of consideration that I could neither eat nor sleep for sheer delight and ecstasy. Ah, what high respect does this great monarch still cherish for Mozart, now in his grave! Indeed, his high respect goes so far that he, as he can do nothing more for Mozart himself, does everything in his power to make his widow as happy as possible without Mozart.

It was this same Ludwig of Bavaria who, passing through Salzburg in 1832, had so greatly embarrassed Constanze by asking her how it happened that she had not erected a tomb to the memory of her first husband. Seeking to justify herself, she replied that the administration of the cemetery, as she then thought, had itself had a cross placed on the tomb.

A half-century having elapsed since Mozart had left her, she finally resolved to have a service in his memory celebrated in the cathedral at Salzburg on Dec. 7, 1841. The Requiem was sung. The Salzburgers themselves awoke to the fact that their city had given birth to one of the greatest of musical geniuses, and when all Germany came thither to inaugurate the statue of Mozart (Sept. 4 to 7, 1842), they invited his son, the musician, to participate in the solemnities by composing a cantata. Wolfgang contented himself by coming to play the Concerto for piano in D minor. But this time he did not find his mother in Salzburg: Constanze died before the great day for which she had wrought, and since March the 9th<sup>1</sup> had reposed in the cemetery of St. Sebastian, to which her sister, Sophie Haibel, had conducted her. Wolfgang returned to Vienna, where he had settled, and for two years thereafter led an aimless life. In the summer of 1844 he departed with his young pupil Emil Pauer (1826-1905) for Karlsbad, whence he never returned.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>She died two days earlier.

<sup>2</sup>He died there July 29. Two days later he was taken to the Karlsbad cemetery, where, on the initiative of a friend (Josephine von Baroni-Cavalcado, the wife of a government counsellor at Lemberg), a tomb was erected to him bearing the inscription:

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**  
Tonkünstler und Tonsetzer

Geboren am 26. Juli 1791, gestorben am 29. Juli 1844. Sohn des grossen Mozarts. Dem Vater ähnlich an Gestalt und edlem Gemüthe. Der Name des Vaters sei seine Grab-schrift, so wie seine Verehrung des ersteren der Inhalt seines Lebens war.

A great name is a weighty inheritance to bear with dignity. Light-minded during her marriage with Mozart, widowed at thirty, Constanze Weber, instructed by her mother's example, but lacking the talent of her elder sisters, was wise enough, when urged by necessity, to grasp the means which her practical mind conceived to be the best to rescue herself and her children from threatening misery. While the musical world, from which she never held aloof, was proclaiming the ever-brightening glory of her first husband, it was not without pride that she cherished his memory; but it was stern necessity, rather than her admiration for a genius that she did not as yet comprehend, that pointed out the path she was to follow, and made her repair her dereliction in abandoning Mozart's remains to an unmarked pauper's grave; and she was doubtless prouder, at first, to be called Mrs. Counsellor of State, than Mrs. Kapellmeister.

By what unavowed sentiments, what suggestions, or, possibly, what bitterness, had she formerly been swayed? Nothing in her private communications or those of her intimates furnishes us with a clue. The biographers of the master have not failed to aim bitter reproaches at his widow. Some few facts among a hundred that have been handed down to us may, however, be considered as so many extenuating circumstances in the eyes of an indulgent posterity, as showing with what praiseworthy, if not invariably enlightened, zeal the wife of Mozart strove to serve the cause of genius in her immediate circle.

*(Translated by Theodore Baker.)*

## ON OLD VIOLINS

By LUCIEN GREILSAMER

(WITH AN AMERICAN EPILOGUE BY JAY C. FREEMAN)

**A**LMOST all the instruments of music that followed, accompanied, or even stimulated the progress of musical art down to the end of the eighteenth century, have disappeared; abandoned because perfected, or replaced by other and wholly new ones.

In this category belong, among stringed instruments either plucked or struck, the different varieties of lutes, the theorbos, the orpheoreon, the sistrums, the harps before Sébastien and Pierre Érard, the dulcimers; among the keyboard instruments with metallic strings the harpsichords, spinets and virginals; among wind-instruments the direct flutes (both douces and à bec), and from the little flageolet up to the bass flute, the bombards, the chalumeaux, the cromornes, and the cervelats; among bow-instruments the family of the viols from the "kit" up to the bass.

However dry the nomenclature of these instruments, their study is none the less interesting. They now repose mutely in the glass-cases of museums or private collections, and are the object of transactions after the pattern of those in other antiques of past centuries.

It is through a knowledge of these that one arrives at a realization of what ancient music actually was. The aim that I have in view to-day is not to resurrect all this sonorous past, but to speak of a family of instruments which, in contrast to what has happened to the others, has been neither modified nor perfected for more than three centuries, and exhibits in every particular a perfection seemingly unsurpassable. This family comprises the violin, the viola, the violoncello, and the contrabass; since its entrance on the scene it has served to interpret the music of the past as it serves nowadays to interpret that of the present, and as it doubtless will serve to interpret that of the future, considering the wonderful flexibility of its expressional resources and the unsurpassable beauty of its sonorous qualities.

By a miracle no less extraordinary in view of the wear and tear of all things here below, these famous instruments made in

Italy by artisans of genius during the period from about 1600 to 1780, have, despite their apparent fragility, braved the tooth of Time and retained their pristine elegance and the ideal purity of their tone. Hence, they are sought by the foremost virtuosi and the best amateurs to the exclusion of all others, because—thanks to them, and to them alone—the finest works of the masters can be reproduced to perfection.

Thus, for example, a violin, viola or violoncello built by Nicola Amati three centuries ago, or by Stradivari at the beginning of the eighteenth century, is to-day as good, as sound, and possessed of the same distinguished tone-quality, as the day it was made. This frail shell, more fragile than a nutshell, has conserved all its qualities throughout centuries:— would that one might say as much of our best-built pianos, clinched with steel, at the end of a mere score of years, particularly when they have been played by a professional pianist.

In these few words are found the reasons that have enshrined the reputation of the old instruments generally known as "Cremonas," though many other towns in Italy have produced them. The most ignorant among us know the names of Amati and Stradivari, while all unconscious of the fact that from the end of the sixteenth century to that of the eighteenth, fifty towns of Italy have been centres of manufacture, and that the names are known of over four hundred and fifty violin-makers who worked there during that time, which gives rise to great confusion and facilitates mistakes and frauds, as we shall see further on.

However, the principal reason for the quest of these instruments to the exclusion of all others is, that since about 1780, after the death of Guadagnini, the old violin-making art of Italy ceased to be, and thenceforward, in spite of every endeavor and all the progress of science, it has been and is still considered to be impossible to produce instruments that approach, even remotely, those classics, whether as regards resonance or with respect to the beauty of the varnish wherewith they are invested.

So it comes, that the finest and best-preserved of these instruments have reached an extremely high price in our time; and what further contributes to their desirability are the memories attaching to them and the histories of the illustrious artists who once owned them and made them the inseparable companions of their careers.

Old violins possess a singular and mysterious attraction which in no way resembles what we feel for other objects of art. The masterpieces of former ages, paintings, sculptures, monuments

of all kinds, move us from determinate aspects; as reflections of an ideal, and of an epoch, they express certain definite and immutable beauties. Old violins are of all epochs and embrace, potentially, all ideals. Inexhaustible, they enclose within the bounds of their harmonious curves not merely one kind of music, but all music; and the music of to-morrow will issue thence as pure and fresh as did the music of old. With regard to them we feel the respect that one accords to venerable witnesses of the past, with this difference:—that we see in them not mute and impassible witnesses, but a species of beings that have thrilled to all the passions, close to the hearts of men, whereof they have interpreted the loftiest aspirations in a divine language. They were part and parcel of all magnificence and all misery; they knew all joys and all sorrows.

Nothing is so rich in suggestion as their story. Whatever their origin, whether they were created for princes or kings, or destined for musicians more or less renowned, sold in the marketplace for a song to village minstrels or humble folk of every sort, they all, thanks to the longevity with which they were endowed, have lived through centuries a life of emotion comparable to that of the men with whom they shared the most diverse, the most paradoxical vicissitudes. Some violin, let me say, that left the hands of Andrea Amati to ornament the *chappelle* of the king of France, Charles IX, and participated in all the festals of the monarchy down to the French Revolution of 1789—may it not, one fine day, have accompanied the bellows of the populace? And follow the strange career of the Guarnerius which, sold two centuries ago in an Italian market for some small change, after passing through the mire of evil resorts and playing for the dances of the rabble of both sexes, now lies proudly encased in silk within the precincts of a palace.

Old violins have their chronicles. Tradition has it that Amati once came to Paris to complete an order from king Charles IX, namely, for 12 violins of small size, 6 violas, and 8 basses. No accounting for this purchase has been found, and it has long been thought that these instruments had been destroyed in the revolutionary turmoil of 1789. Now, two of them still exist. One (according to Hart) is in England, and we possess no details with regard to it; as for the other we are informed. It bears the arms of the House of France and the monogram of Charles IX. Its four corners are embellished by fleurs de lis. It was preserved for us in this wise:

During the day of August 10, 1792, the Swiss Guards, to the number of 600 men, were massacred by the populace. A single

man, Jean Tardi, escaped as by a miracle, and though wounded, pursued and hounded, found refuge with his friend, the inspector of the Royal Wardrobe, who gave him, when healed, a violin, partly to help him gain a living on his travels, and partly to disarm the suspicion of his enemies by posing as an itinerant minstrel. In this guise he reached Freiburg, his native town, where the patrician von der Weid bought it for 3500 francs. This instrument, a witness of the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Revolution, later passed into the hands of a titled amateur of Reichenbach in Germany.

Another royal violin had a singular fate. The King of England, George I, had ordered a violin of Stradivari. This instrument, dated 1716, remained in the royal family until the opening of the nineteenth century. It then passed, for reasons unknown to us, into the hands of a titled Scotchman, a British officer, whom it followed everywhere as part of his baggage. So it happened that it assisted at the battle of Waterloo. Thereafter, the officer's family offered it to the violinist Molique; he in turn bequeathed it to his pupil, Baron von Dreifuss of Munich; and in February, 1889, it was acquired by the violinist Waldemar Meyer. After its completion, therefore, it passed through six different hands.

Here we note a curious coincidence; two French generals took part in the campaigns of the First Empire with their Stradivaris in their luggage; so we see that three Stradivaris participated in the great Napoleonic epopee, in the opposing armies.

There are some violins that have known neither the grandeur of courts nor the perils of the battlefield, and yet, in their purely artistic careers, have incurred dangers of another order and won glory of a different kind. Especially worth of mention among these are the violins of Viotti, Rode, Paganini, Kreutzer, Alard, Vieuxtemps, Joachim, White and Sarasate; the contrabass of Dragonetti; and the violoncellos of Dupont, Davidoff, Haussmann, Batta, Piatti, Baudiot, Vaslin, Romberg, Servais, *et al.*

Sarasate owned two violins by Stradivari, one of which he bought of Vuillaume at the outset of his career. In his concerts he played on this instrument exclusively, and bequeathed it to the museum of the Paris Conservatoire, where it may be seen. Later he acquired another violin, which he left to his native city. The very curious history of this violin is little known. The instrument is designated by Fétis-Vuillaume as the "Boissier violin," and one of the finest made by the Cremonese master. Under what circumstances did it emerge from obscurity, about a century ago?

M. Boissier, a wealthy citizen of Geneva, was driving out in a carriage one day in the environs of the city, when he noticed that his horse had cast a shoe. He repaired to the nearest blacksmith in the village to have the shoe replaced. During this operation, while mechanically watching the artisan at his labors, his attention was drawn to a violin hanging against the wall. Boissier was a great amateur of *lutherie*, and a keen connoisseur, besides. He went up to the instrument and, while curiously examining it, asked the blacksmith:

"Do you play the violin?"

"Monsieur is pleased to jest," replied the latter, holding out his great calloused hands; "these are not fit to handle such-like playthings."

"But how then—?"

"This is how that violin comes to be here.—Some twelve years ago a big devil of a Gypsy came to get me to make an urgent repair on his carriage, broken down on the highway. I made the repair, and as it was more considerable than we had expected, the Gypsy declared he had not money enough to pay for it. 'I am an honest man (he said), and if you are willing I'll leave you my violin as a pledge. In a few days I shall pass by here again, and will pay you—you can count on that.' I consented the more readily because, as the repair had been made, that seemed the wisest course. The Gypsy never appeared again, and since then his violin hangs on the wall."

"Would you sell the violin?"

"Yes, for the price of the repair. I remember it as if it were yesterday—thirty francs exactly."

"I'll give you five hundred francs, for it's worth that, and your Gypsy really was an honest fellow."

The astonished blacksmith joyfully accepted the offer, and Boissier returned to Geneva with his Stradivari—for the reader will have guessed that it was the famous violin that was not to be sold until his death. This "Boissier" was purchased by the Paris violin-maker Vuillaume; later it disappeared for some twenty years; it had been in the hands of a provincial amateur who sold it one day to a Parisian violin-maker, from whom Sarasate bought it, and carried it with him during the season of 1888-9 at Geneva, where the artist had lodgings at the Hotel de Russie.

I cannot forbear ending this anecdote with a warning to the benevolent reader that one no longer finds Stradivaris in blacksmith-shops, and that if, by chance, he should happen on a violin under similar conditions, he may be quite sure that it is an instrument of slight value and placed there by some astute and clairvoyant dealer.

In the world of violin-makers and dealers in violins, every celebrated violin is known under a by-name commemorative

either of some episode in its career, or of the name of one of its various and successive owners, or, it may be, of some characteristic peculiar to the instrument itself.

To Vidal, the friend of the violin-maker Vuillaume and of his son-in-law the violinist Alard, we owe an anecdote telling how the Stradivarius known as "The Messiah" came to be thus baptized.

This magnificent violin, unique of its kind, and absolutely new, lay for sixty years without being played in the collection of Count Cozio di Salabue at Milan. It was bought in 1824 by the greatest art-dealer in old instruments who ever lived, namely, a certain Tarisio. He, on his frequent trips to Paris, always mentioned it with emphasis, while taking good care never to show it, so sure was he of getting a good price for it whenever he would.

One day, when on a visit to Vuillaume, he began again on his favorite theme: "If you could only see my famous violin de Salabue."—"Oh, forget it!" exclaimed Alard, who was present, "your violin is just like the Messiah, who is always expected and who never appears!?"—So the violin was baptized. Vuillaume did not purchase it till 1855, a year after the death of Tarisio.

All the instruments made by Stradivarius excite the admiration of connoisseurs by the perfection of their design, the splendor of their varnish, and their nobility of tone. There is one among them which, aside from these qualities, moves us by the sole fact of its existence; on viewing it one is penetrated by a sentiment of well-nigh religious reverence. I mean *Le chant du cygne* (the swan-song). This violin is, in very deed, the swan-song of the master; it was the last to leave the hands of the aged Antonio, and the inscription it bears on its ribs affects us—to borrow the expression of the Messrs. Hill in their "Life of Stradivari"—as something pathetic. It apprises us that its author was then ninety-three years of age! Previous to this, Stradivari already, with an old man's natural coquetry, had inscribed his age in several violins. Four such inscriptions are known besides the one here noted:



Facsimile of the label placed in the interior of the Stradivari violin called "*Le chant du cygne*."

By the aid of these notices it has been possible to search out, in the archives of Cremona, the exact dates of the birth and death of the greatest and most illustrious of violin-makers.

In the instruments of earlier make than *Le chant du cygne*, the age-dates were written by the hand of Stradivari himself; but in this particular case this is not so. The inscription "d'anni 93" is in a handwriting different from his. It was long debated, to whom it should be attributed—down to the day when there was discovered, in a violin by his son Omobono (likewise a violin-maker), a manuscript label in characters in every respect similar to those of "d'anni 93." The writer was now discovered. It was Omobono, whose filial piety had moved him to leave to posterity this testimony to the green and lucid old-age of his father.

*Le chant du cygne* was the partner in the glory of the celebrated Brazilian virtuoso and professor Joseph White, who, with the exception of his world-wide concert-tours, pursued his vocation wholly in Paris. This instrument possesses remarkable acoustical qualities, in that respect rivalling its elders. But in the details of its construction one can see that its venerable maker's hand trembled. Nevertheless, it worthily closes the series of violins called "of the final period."

This gem of *lutherie*, from every aspect an object to be coveted, inspired the French poet Jules de Marthold to write an enthusiastic sonnet, which he dedicated to me, and which I published in the review *S. I. M.* some years before the death of Joseph White. It is reproduced below, being remarkable both for elevation of conception and impeccable form.

#### LE CHANT DU CYGNE

Le Maître a terminé son chef-d'œuvre et le signe,  
L'érable et le sapin contiennent tous les chants,  
Naissance, hymen ou mort, les aubes, les couchants,  
Espoirs, douleurs, sanglots, ou son génie insigne

Asservit à jamais la forme curviligne,  
Cris du cœur, voix du ciel, choc des flots, paix des champs,  
Ce violon sublime aux crescendo touchants,  
Lyre ou l'écho renait, sera son chant de Cygne.

Quand il a tout prévu géométriquement,  
Comme l'artiste sait que le froid calcul ment,  
Ému de Dieu, foyer qui nous prête sa flamme,

Subissant l'inconnu, mystérieuse loi,  
Pour revivre en ce bois il dédouble son âme,  
Animant la matière au souffle de sa foi.

Among the instruments of celebrity we may mention the "Kreutzer," named after its most illustrious possessor, Rodolphe

Kreutzer (b. Versailles, 1766; d. Geneva, 1831). He brought out forty-seven works on the lyric stage, and at the same time pursued a brilliant career as a virtuoso violinist. For the violin he composed nineteen concertos, some of which are classics, besides his book of Etudes. He purchased his Stradivarius (dated 1720) the 20th *ventose* (March 7th) in year III of the Republic (1795); he was then 29. It was on this instrument, and under the fingers of the great violinist for whom it was composed and to whom it is dedicated, that was publicly interpreted for the first time the sonata for piano and violin by Beethoven which bore thenceforward the title of *Kreutzer Sonata*.

We shall also call to mind the Guarnerius of Paganini in the museum at Geneva; the Guarnerius of Alard in the museum of the Conservatoire at Paris; the Gasparo da Salò of Ole Bull in the museum at Bergen—all three condemned to perpetual seclusion. Then, there are several instruments made for the Spanish court, the ornamentation of which is well suited to the national taste. And we shall finish the list by naming the contrabass of Dragonetti. This famed virtuoso, forgotten to-day, was born at Venice in 1763. He may rightly be termed the Paganini of the contrabass, for on this unpromising instrument he displayed a virtuosity of kindred sort that might fairly be termed marvellous, and his concerts were thronged like those of the famous violinist.

The maker of Dragonetti's contrabass was Gasparo da Salò. It had belonged to the monastery of Saint Mark in Venice, and was presented by the authorities of the monastery to the youthful virtuoso in testimony of their high admiration for his talents. On this same contrabass Dragonetti played in his concerts. All his life long he refused to sell it; he had decided that the beloved instrument should be returned to the monastery of Saint Mark, by which it had been so generously presented.

Dragonetti always used a bow made after a pattern invented by himself and, naturally, suited to his temperamental and physical aptitudes. His reputation as a virtuoso was so great throughout Europe that when, in 1827, the Conservatoire of Paris began, under the impulsion of Habeneck, to occupy itself seriously with music for full orchestra, and it was found necessary to instruct the contrabassists required for such music, the style of bow to be adopted came up for discussion. It was the bow "*à la Dragonetti*" that was chosen by the committee composed of Messrs. Chénier, Lamy and Sorne, contrabassists in the Chapelle du Roi.

Like all other objects of art and "*curios*" of the oldentime, the products of the violin-maker's art are the objects of an

important branch of trade, and are subjected to frauds of various sort.

Before discussing the very peculiar question of frauds it is necessary to understand exactly what we have to do with and to get some notion of what the ancient Italian art of violin-making really was. People in general know the names of two celebrated cities and the names of two or three renowned artisans; whereas, as we mentioned above, there were some 450 makers who worked in 50 Italian towns from the end of the sixteenth century to the close of the eighteenth, whose products are commonly called instruments of Cremona, or "Cremonas."

Thus we count up thirty violin-makers for Bologna and thirty more for Brescia; in Cremona we find fifty, and forty in Florence; forty in Milan, thirty in Naples, fifty in Venice, etc.

The patriarchal schools of the Magginis, the Amatis, the Guarneris and the Stradivaris experimented in all directions, and their pupils as well as their continuators produced instruments that were often remarkable, sometimes of unequal value, but always of honest workmanship.

It was only subsequent to the wars of the French Revolution and the Empire that a classification was made. Hence it comes that we are indebted to Paganini for making known the high value of the Guarneri violins, and to de Bériot for an appreciation of the Maggini instruments. Excepting Germany, in the person of Jacob Stainer, who has enjoyed a certain reputation and is said to have been a pupil of Amati (although the design of his instruments differs *in toto* from the Italian style), and whose authentic creations are extremely rare, no country has produced instruments comparable to those of Italy, either at the same epoch or later.

Legends have grown up; there has been talk of a secret—as if a secret known by a great number of persons could be kept for two centuries. An opinion has also been spread abroad and repeated everywhere, to the effect that improvement in quality was due to the lapse of time, and it is this opinion that still instigates searchers after old violins. It will be readily understood that this is a mere prejudice without foundation, in fact when we learn that no instrument foreign to Italy has been so improved, and that they all remain inferior.

While there was no secret in the true sense of the term, there certainly was a carefully conceived plan of construction difficult to ascertain once the instrument was finished, defying imitation by any uninitiated artisan—especially with regard to the varnish, the formula for which has never been made known. It is uncon-

testable, first of all from an esthetic viewpoint, that this varnish possesses a beauty and distinction that makes of the instruments it covers veritable gems of art. Charles Read, the celebrated English connoisseur and collector, remarks on this head:

When a red Stradivarius violin is made of soft velvety wood, and the varnish is just half worn off the back in a rough triangular form, that produces a certain beauty of light and shade which is, in my opinion, the *nec plus ultra*.

After numerous personal experiences of mine in this matter during the course of the past thirty years it seems to me unquestionable that the varnish has a considerable influence on the resonance, and very specially contributes towards endowing the instruments with that immaterial tone characteristic of the fine old Italian specimens.

In the different schools, and even with the same maker, the varnish differs in color. We see varnishes that are brown, or golden yellow, or orange, or red like old Bordeaux wine, or even bright red verging on scarlet. Time may have softened the tints, but in certain well-preserved instruments it would seem that the beauty of the varnish has remained as pure as the very voice of the instrument.

It is the varnish that serves as the first point of departure in discovering the mistakes or frauds of which we are now to speak.

While, like all objects of art that have become articles of commerce, old violins form the object of divers fraudulent transactions, there is a distinction which differentiates old instruments from other antiques; in all these others it is the primordial quality that gives them their value; in musical instruments, however, the primordial quality is the tone. Of this quality alone the expert declares himself unqualified to judge. "That is not in my province," he says, "my opinion concerns authenticity only." And he goes on to say that tone is a matter of personal and individual taste, so that an uncontestable estimate of its value is impossible.

The most wide-spread of all fraudulent practices has to do with the labels. As we know, the old makers never signed their creations, but simply glued inside them a label bearing the maker's name and the date (year) when the instrument was completed.

It would avail us little to dilate on the hundreds of thousands of cheap, modern instruments now in circulation and bearing the labels of masters of highest repute. These can hardly be called frauds, for nobody is deceived by them; besides, they are not at all

intended to lead the purchaser astray. They are just a commercial tradition; censurable, to be sure, but nothing more.

Per contra, there are labels that constitute frauds of the worst kind. Some are naïvely lithographed—an anachronism which reveals their falsity at first glance—but there are others more skillfully fabricated by means of ancient characters imprinted on ancient paper torn from the margins of books of that period, and still others cleverly photographed and stereotyped to produce an accurate facsimile of the original label. Such labels, placed in old instruments of the French, German or Tyrolese school, are calculated to victimize the inexperienced purchaser.

A third kind of fraud in the use of labels is the following:—This time we have to do with authentic labels of the great masters—Stradivarius, Guarnerius, Bergonzi, Montagnano, etc.—which have been glued inside of old Italian instruments. In case such instruments were made by artisans of the same school as the master in question, and are well constructed (as sometimes happens), the most skillful experts are often puzzled. One must have examined a great many instruments by these masters to be thoroughly familiar with all details of their construction, and to recognize them when occasion demands. This fraudulent practice explains why so many fine instruments are deprived of their original labels; so that—to reverse the practice—they are provided with modern labels exactly imitated from the genuine as proofs of their authenticity; which equally explains why so many more instruments than the masters actually produced are in the hands of dealers, artists, and collectors.

To end our chapter on labels, it is also well to know that sundry clever impostors have exploited a decidedly original idea. They have invented names of Italian violin-makers to whom, by means of labels, they have attributed old and valueless violins.

Another “trick of the trade” is worked with the aid of new instruments. When one such is finished, it is treated with chemicals both inside and outside, to give the wood an appearance of age. Then dents and cracks are deliberately made and carefully repaired; after which the varnish is rubbed and soiled to imitate the wear of natural use. Now comes the crowning artifice; in the interior are placed supporting-pieces of very white wood, contrasting strongly with the tint of the “old” wood, in imitation of similar supports which sometimes have to be used in repairing genuine antiques for thickening and strengthening the parts.

The would-be buyer, a novice who thinks himself an expert, always starts by examining the interior of an instrument through

the *f*-holes. He sees the new reinforcements of very white wood which contrast with the "old" wood, and this makes him think that the instrument is old.

This species of fraud is easily recognized, and is aimed especially at quite inexperienced purchasers.

Still another, and more serious, fraudulent device has been practised for only a score or so of years. Skilled workmen utilize *débris* of every description, if it be old, sometimes pieces of fine instruments so badly broken as to be useless; by fashioning them ingeniously they succeed in giving them the very characteristic aspect of some early school. Some of these instruments are so deceptively wrought that an expert often finds himself obliged to look at them twice before he can detect the fraud. Even the most astute have been caught.

Some instruments are in existence, however, which have been sold for a good price, and which are the product of analogous operations. They were sold, to begin with, for what they really were. We are told that when the celebrated art-dealer Tarisio—who literally emptied Italy of all her instruments that he might resell them in other countries—came to Paris, he brought along quantities of pieces of instruments, together with some fine instruments certain parts of which were wanting, or of which some parts (the belly, the back, the ribs, or the scroll) were in such bad shape that they could not be mended. With these *débris* the violin-makers who bought them "reconstituted" violins which pass since then for genuine.

I know violins of which Vuillaume made over the belly, ribs or scroll by replacing the missing parts with new ones or with other parts that had belonged to instruments of the same period; or he would build a Stradivarius out of the fragments of two or three broken Strads. There is one such violin which changes hands now and again and which is known to the initiated as "The Harlequin" by reason of its construction from strangely assorted pieces and parts.

Continuing along these lines, we might characterize as a "fraud" any instrument that has undergone important repairs because of accidents or deterioration by thinning, unless the buyer has been told in advance of such defects.

There are likewise genuine instruments that have been revarnished. Revarnishing detracts considerably from the value of an old Italian violin, for, as we have seen in the foregoing, the varnish, aside from its esthetic qualities, plays an extremely important rôle in ancient *lutherie*. Here we do not refer solely to

instruments whose original varnish has been removed for one reason or another. The early violin-makers left a goodly number of instruments unvarnished, notably Stradivarius. Thus it happens that Prince Nicholas Youssoupow, a noted amateur who kept a valuable collection in his palace at St. Petersburg, tells of an operation of this sort (instigated by himself) in a work he wrote in 1856:

A violin by Antonius Stradivarius, bearing a label of 1702, which was purchased from the family of Antoine Stradivarius, after the latter's death in 1790, by Giovanni Gagliano, is at the present writing in the care of Messrs. Schott Frères at Brussels. This violin, which the celebrated maker finished but did not varnish, was recognized and approved in 1720 by Nicolò Paganini as coming from the hands of Antoine Stradivarius. Prince Youssoupow acquired it at Naples in 1854; in 1855 one of the best violin-makers in Vienna restored it completely, without harming in any way the evenness and purity of its tone—a result vouched for, moreover, by Messrs. Bériot, Vieuxtemps, Haumann, Mayseder, Helmesberger, and other high musical authorities of Germany, Belgium and Italy.

And, should it be desired to go still more deeply into a sufficiently complex subject, it would be interesting to examine the conditions under which the Italian violin-makers did their work. Each master had apprentices who, in their turn, became masters later and adopted designs of their own. But during all the time that they worked in the atelier of their master, they worked for him and employed his patterns, giving their instruments the character required by him. So we find in trade circles Amati violins that are believed to have come from the hands of Stradivarius while he was an apprentice in the workshop of the former. It cannot even be maintained that the pupils and apprentices merely finished their pieces in the rough, the master applying the finishing touches. That goes contrary to every conception of apprenticeship, for an apprentice ought to learn how to do everything necessary. But in the cases now under consideration it can be affirmed that finishing in the rough is as important as the final finish, and that a single maladroitness of a tool suffices to spoil the whole work.

Unquestionably, there are instruments on the market that were made by pupils and sold by the master as if by his own hand. How may we recognize them to-day?

We know of a striking example in modern times. The celebrated French *luthier* Vuillaume, who labored until near the end of the nineteenth century, signed more than three thousand violins, without counting violas and violoncellos. Now, it is known that he had workmen and, furthermore, that he was busily occupied

with business affairs. Where could he have found time to make and varnish three thousand violins?

This leads quite naturally up to the question of experts and expert evidence.

Anybody, as we know, has a right to style himself an expert. To do so one does not have to graduate from a technical school, or to wear any title whatever, or to pass an examination for proficiency.

It is the custom, when a lawsuit comes before the judges, that they choose as experts dealers in stringed instruments, and very seldom artisans in the branch. Now, expert evidence from such a source, while comprehensible in the case of objects of modern manufacture, is less so for antiques. In the matter of shoes, for instance, a shoemaker naturally has expert knowledge as to whether they are made of good leather or of cardboard, whether they are sewn or pegged, and the like. But what is demanded of an expert in ancient instruments? "Can you certify that the instrument named in this suit is actually the work of the maker to whom it was ascribed when sold?"

The primary question, that of resonant quality, being waived in this case, as has been noted before, I shall consider only the question of genuineness, and ask, Can one give assurance that a given instrument was made by such or such an one?—It can be done in some cases where the personality of the maker is recognizable in certain characteristic details of construction. Nevertheless, I can affirm that I have seen instruments passing under the same maker's name, as certified by experts, which differed greatly in the matter of handiwork and in general appearance.

With respect to instruments in a class by themselves, altogether remarkable, the situation is quite different. They are all known, catalogued, photographed. For over a century they have passed from hand to hand with their pedigrees, and with regard to them one cannot say that the expert *knows* them, but that he *recognizes* them—a distinction with a difference.

Let us assume for a moment that some one has found a Stradivarius, admirably preserved, and unknown. All the experts will hesitate to pronounce it genuine, because they do not *know* it as such, because it does not possess a *curriculum vitæ*—in a word, because it does not figure in the list of known Strads. A hypothetical case, you say? Well, this very hypothesis once became a living reality. One day an unknown person brought to the English violin-maker Betts a violin that seemed quite new. As such, Betts bought it for one pound sterling. He laid it aside

without paying further attention to it; and it was only at a much later date, after long examination and great hesitation, and after consulting his colleagues, that he finally pronounced this violin to be a genuine Stradivarius. To-day, this violin is regarded as one of the most remarkable that came from the master's hands.

It should be added that instruments may be on the market accompanied by documents referring to other instruments, which considerably complicates a question already complicated.

To crown all, collectors of labels have, to gratify their mania, deprived a considerable number of instruments of their precious inscriptions, thus unwittingly lending themselves to errors, if not to frauds.

The collectors of instruments are otherwise of interest, having preserved for a long period instruments no longer in vogue, which might have been destroyed as useless. They have, therefore, rendered a great service to musical science as regards the study of the past. By preserving the instruments of the violin-family the earliest collectors created reserves at a time when, by reason of intensive production in Italy, a plethora had set in. When scarcity succeeded, and renewed needs made themselves felt, artists and amateurs rejoiced on seeing instruments issue from these collections, intact for the most part, and in general in a state of perfect preservation.

Collections of instruments—except those of the old patrician families of Italy, of Pietro Correr in Venice, and of the Englishman Corbett, who died in 1748, and concerning whom little is known—date from the end of the eighteenth century or the beginning of the nineteenth. Before the hour of the decadence of the violin-makers' art in Italy had struck, there was formed in that country the first collection of instruments played with a bow. Count Cozio di Salabue gathered together the finest instruments of this kind that he could find—instruments that had so long done honor to his country. He resold them in 1801; and at this sale the celebrated violin known as "The Messiah," which we mentioned previously, was acquired by another collector who was at the same time a dealer *emeritus*—Luigi Tarisio.

In point of fact, collections of old instruments were built up during the nineteenth century, and have been dispersed in the course of the same. The instruments they comprised have gone to enrich national museums, or have themselves originated museums, like that of Clapisson, which formed the embryo of the museum of the Paris Conservatoire, since so greatly developed. As for the bow-instruments once belonging to these collections,

they fell into the hands of amateurs and artists who have delivered them from their imprisoning glass-cases and returned them to that musical life for which they were created. One may feel regret that some few of them have reëntered the museums, whence there is little hope that they will again escape.

The most important of these private collections were:

In Italy that of Count Cozio di Salabue at Milan; of Count Castellarco at Milan; of Count Pietro Correr at Venice.

In England those of the last Duke of Cambridge; of Lord Falmouth; of the Duke of Marlborough; of Lord Macdonald; of Andrew Fontaine; of James Goding and of Joseph Gillot.

In Belgium those of Wilmotte, at Antwerp, and of Snoeck of Ghent. In Germany those of Wilhelm Heyer, at Cologne; of Paul de Wit, at Leipzig; of Niederheitmann, at Aachen.

In America, of George Smith of Chicago.

In France, those of Comte de Chaponay, at Lyons; of Viscomte Janzé, at Paris; of M. St. Senoch, at Paris; of Duc de Camposelice, at Paris; of Gauthier, at Nice; of Jubinal, at Paris; of Marquis de St. Hilaire, at Paris; of Tolbecque, at Niort; of Sauvageot, at Paris; of Savoie, at Paris.

We should also mention some possessors of quarter-sets composed of remarkable instruments.

Collectors of bow-instruments are becoming fewer and fewer, owing to the diffusion of this branch of art throughout the world. These instruments are more and more sought after by artists and amateurs whose number has multiplied. Formerly, fine specimens were to be found in Italy, in France, and in England. Italy has gradually been drained, while Germany has attracted a large number to herself. France and Britain are beginning to see themselves dispossessed of their beautiful instruments, many going to the United States and others elsewhere. In every quarter of the globe a violinist, a violist, or a violoncellist, who thinks well of himself and has the wherewithal, endeavors to lay hands on a fine old Italian instrument, whatever the cost.

At the present time, these old Italian instruments form the object of a worldwide commerce. Before taking up the subject of the prices at which the several categories of instruments are quoted, it is well to recall what was formerly paid for them, and to consider the processes that have led up to the present prices.

Documents referring to the matter are quite rare. Where France is concerned, interesting information may be found in "Les Affiches, Annonces et Avis divers," a periodical founded in 1752. This weekly publication prints a caption under which are listed goods and estates for sale, and the articles that the

advertisers wish to dispose of. Among said articles are found instruments of music. (To calculate present values of the prices noted, one should know that the livre was worth about one gold franc, and the louis was 24 livres.)

Below we copy word for word what may be gleaned concerning instruments of the violin-family.

- April 23, 1761. A violin of Cremona, dated 1683; price, 30 louis.  
 April 27, 1775. A violin of Stradivarius. Apply to le sieur de la Chevardière, rue de Roule, à la croix d'or, 40 louis.  
 January 3, 1766. A violin of Amati, 12 louis.  
 August 11, 1768. A violin of Guersan, 4 louis.  
 May 11, 1769. An excellent violin of Stradivarius, 50 louis.  
 May 13, 1771. A Stradivarius, 10 louis.  
 January 25, 1773. A violoncello in good condition, of Ant. and Ger. Amati of Cremona, once owned by a king of France. (No price given.)  
 August 8, 1774. A violin of Becquet, 15 louis.  
 December 23, 1776. An excellent violin of Cremona, of Amati, with new neck by Becquet, 8 louis.  
 November 24, 1777. Good violoncello of Cremona made in 1688 25 louis.  
 January 30, 1777. A violin of Amati, at Salomon's, 28 louis.  
 February 27, 1777. A violin of Klotz, 48 livres.  
 August 18, 1777. A violin of Maggini, 35 louis.  
 August 18, 1777. A violin of Amati, 300 livres.  
 June 22, 1778. Violin of Stainer, asking 500 livres.  
 October 19, 1778. Violin of Guersan (1763), 120 livres.  
 December 20, 1778. Violin of Stainer, 50 louis.  
 January 17, 1781. Violin of Amati, cost 25 louis, sell for 15; an other, cost 50 louis, sell for 35.  
 April 26, 1782. Violin of Amati, with case for two violins, 20 louis  
 May 11, 1782. Two violins, one of Cremona, the other of Guersan with fine case, 15 louis.  
 July 31, 1782. A violin of Guersan, 72 livres.

From this list it is apparent that the Italian violins, while highly appreciated, did not sell for very high prices. Regarding differences of price for pieces by the same maker, conclusions cannot be drawn, as we do not know the instruments in question.

From the end of the eighteenth century till about 1840-50, prices remained practically the same. Thus, in 1808, the violin called "The Messiah" was estimated, at the inventory of Count Cozio di Salabue, at 120 pounds sterling. In 1824 was sold at auction the superb violin of Viotti, coming direct from his heirs, for 3816 francs. About that time, Habeneck bought from Lupot a Stradivarius for 2400 francs; and in 1839 the beautiful violin of Rode was sold for 4000 francs.

We have the testimony of the violin-maker Vuillaume to the effect that at this period the price for Stradivarius violins averaged some 2400 francs, and for Guarnerius violins 1200 francs. Thenceforward, prices followed an ascending curve. We shall take at random a few instruments whose price can be traced through successive sales.

"The Messiah" of 1716, which I have already mentioned several times in the course of this article, was sold, after Vuillaume's death, to his son-in-law the violinist Alard for 25,000 francs; when he died, it was purchased by Mr. Crawford of Edinburgh for 50,000 francs (1890).

In 1881 Mr. Meier of London paid 20,000 francs for a Stradivarius violin of 1715; in 1882 Viscomte Greffuhle bought one of 1709 for 23,000 francs, Mr. Ruston another of 1718 for 25,000 francs; and the Duke of Camposelice, after having paid 20,000 francs in 1884 for Vieuxtemps' violin of 1710, bought for 25,000 francs the one of 1713 relinquished by Mr. Adams. Finally, Mr. Meier gave 30,000 francs for the violin of 1693 that had belonged to Garcia of Madrid, and later to M. Wilmotte. "Le Chant du Cygne," also spoken of above, was sold by Miremont to M. de Nagorof before 1870 for 4500 francs, passed into the hands of Mr. Laurie towards 1875 for 12,000 francs, and was resold by him to M. de St. Senock for 17,500 francs. In 1886 it was again sold to the violinist J. White for 20,000 francs.

On the part of the violoncello we note a similar progression. An instrument of 1711 which was acquired by Duport for 2400 francs, then by Vuillaume for 20,000, became the property of Franchomme for 22,000, and was sold by his family for 40,000 francs to Mr. Hill of London, by whom it was sold, we believe, for 70,000 francs.—The Stradivarius violoncello of 1701, owned by the violoncellist Gervais, was bought, about 1890, for 50,000-odd francs. Although instruments by Joseph Guarnerius are excessively rare, a violin of 1740 was bought by M. Wilmotte for 22,000 francs and purchased by Mlle. Mey in 1885 for 24,000 francs.

The Guarnerius of Vieuxtemps, dated 1748, was acquired by the Duke of Camposelice in 1884 for 20,000 francs.

As for the violas, we note the one known under the name of "Macdonald," which was sold between 1820 and 1830 for 105 pounds sterling. Vicomte Janzé purchased it for 212 pounds sterling, and sold it in 1886 to the Duke of Camposelice for 1200 pounds sterling. This viola is a Strad.

Prices were maintained, with slight augmentation, for exceptionally fine pieces until 1914. I know, for instance, of a superb

Stradivarius that was sold in 1904 for 35,000 francs, and of an unblemished Guarnerius sold in 1914 for 30,000 francs.

The transactions effected during the course of the World War are not pertinent; but from 1918 onward a vast change took place. In order to grasp its full significance, we should begin by taking note of a classification devised by the Italian violin-makers of past times. Till now I have hardly noticed any instruments but those of the first rank, the only ones, so to speak, of a quotable value that would not seem fantastic; the prices of others being far more subject to caprice and individual liking. But, nowadays, prices beyond the reach of many purses for instruments in a class by themselves, bought for fabulous sums—very often for reasons apart from their fineness of tone—have stimulated the sale of those considered to be of the second or third rank.

Following is the order in which one can, approximately, classify the principal old-Italian makers:

First of all, the *supermen* Antonius Stradivarius and Joseph Guarnerius del Gesù.—Then:

*Of the First Rank*

Maggini (G. Paolo)  
Amati (Nicola)  
Bergonzi (Carlo)  
Montagnana (Domenico)

*Of the Second Rank*

Guarnerius (Joseph, son of Andrea)  
Guarnerius (Pietro)  
Grancino (Paolo)  
Gagliano (Alessandro)  
Gobetti (Francesco)

*Of the Third Rank*

Amati (Girolamo)  
Amati (Antonio)  
Rugieri (Francesco)  
Rugieri (Giacinto)  
Rugieri (Vincenzo)  
Storione (Lorenzo)  
Grancino (Andrea)  
Grancino (Giambattista)  
Grancino (Giovanni)  
Guadagnini (Giambattista)  
Testore (Carlo Giuseppe)  
Testore (Carlo Antonio)  
Testore (Paolo Antonio)

Gagliano (Gennaro)  
Gagliano (Nicola)  
Gagliano (Ferdinando)  
Techler (David)  
Cappa (Goffredo)  
Santo (Seraphino)  
Rogeri (Giambattista)

All others may be relegated to the Fourth or Fifth Rank, according to the quality of the instrument and not because of the maker's name.

This classification is certainly incomplete, and must not be considered definitive, for still another element has to be reckoned with which is not applicable in this case—the quality of the instrument. An instrument of the second or third rank may have greater intrinsic value than one of the first rank, this depending on its state of preservation and its resonant qualities. And, for this reason I have quoted prices only for superlative instruments like those of Stradivarius and Joseph Guarnerius.

I shall not speak of the rare transactions effected during the last war. Of trifling importance, they cannot be regarded as informative. But directly after the war, towards 1920, the prices of instruments, like those of all other art-objects, rose markedly.

As the difference in monetary values has become very great between different countries, or as between certain countries, at least, we should bear in mind that up to 1914 the value of the franc, the dollar, and the pound, was reckoned in gold, the scale of values being approximately as follows: The pound sterling was worth five dollars, and the dollar was worth five francs. To-day the dollar and pound have the same relative value, whereas the value of the franc is about one-fifth what it was. It may be stated, in general terms, that the superlative Italian instruments, and those of the first rank, have quadrupled in value since 1914.

Two sensational recent sales furnish a typical example. The Stradivarius violin known as "The Emperor," and put on the market at the Gillott sale previously mentioned, was purchased by the violinist Jan Kubelik for about one million francs; and the violinist Mischa Elman lately acquired that of Count Molitor, also for a million francs. Now, before 1914, these instruments were valued at from sixty to sixty-five thousand francs. Multiply this figure by five, and you obtain from three hundred to three hundred and twenty-five thousand francs. Taking the present (1926) rate of exchange, the million would be far exceeded; in reality, these instruments have only quadrupled in value.

It is proper to add that this augmentation is not the same for instruments of the second, third or fourth rank. Such instruments being purchased less on account of their label, the renown of their earlier owners, their history, or their exceeding rarity, than for their resonant quality and the service they can render the artist who uses them, an apparent confusion as regards their price may manifest itself. This confusion is, in fact, merely apparent, for it derives from amateurs and artists who, in conformity with their personal taste and the requirements of their musical temperament, classify the instruments according to their special capacities and the expressional peculiarities proper to each. This classification is, assuredly, the most accurate of all, but, not being commercial, it cannot serve as a basis for commercial transactions.

All in all, it may be stated that instruments of the first rank have followed those classed as superlative, while those of the lower ranks have, on the whole, doubled in price. As for the violoncellos, they are sought after more and more, and their value has quadrupled like those of violins of the higher rank. This fact may be explained by the greater vogue of violoncello-playing in recent times, particularly among the ladies. This is, after all, only a return to the practice of earlier centuries, when the bass-viol was very frequently operated by feminine hands.

Mention might still be made of instruments not of Italian manufacture, which are, in part, not wanting in merit. But that would overpass the limits of this study, so incomplete as it is, whose sole aim is to show how interesting, from many aspects, is the violin-maker's art, without which modern music would not exist, and many an imperishable masterwork would never have seen the light.

I do not wish to close without a few words on the bow, whose value has increased in even greater ratio than that of the instruments.

As everyone knows, it is to François Tourte, who died in 1835, that we owe the modern bow, without which the artist would be powerless to play well on the best of instruments. Tourte, a man wholly destitute of training, created—thanks to some marvellous intuition—the bows which since then have served as models; for, besides his singularly apt choice of the wood, he instinctively discovered the laws governing the shape. The profile of Tourte's bow is represented by a logarithmic curve whose ordinates cross in arithmetical progression, whereas its abscissas cross in geometrical progression. Furthermore, he ascertained that the centre of gravity should be, for the violin, at 19 centimetres' distance from

the nut, and for the violoncello at 175-180 millimetres from the nut.

A score of years ago a bow by Tourte sold for something like a thousand francs. To-day, when one can be found, it is valued at several thousand francs, the sum depending on the dealer's caprice. Bows by Peccatte and Voirin, which at that period sold for perhaps 200 francs, are now worth ten times as much; and among those that were priced at fifty francs—by Adam, Lamy, Lupot, Simon, etc.—are found some selling easily for 500 francs or more to-day.

All these bows are of French manufacture; but we ought to mention two celebrated bow-makers of England, Tubbs and Dodd (surnamed the English Tourte), whose bows are sold at extremely high figures.

(Translated by Theodore Baker.)

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November 16th, 1926.

*To the Editor:*

I have read with interest Dr. Baker's translation of Mr. Lucian Greilsamer's article on Rare Old Violins.

Mr. Greilsamer seems to have a much better acquaintance with the European Collectors of three or four decades ago than with those of the present day, and his knowledge of American Collections seems also to be based on conditions which existed here thirty or more years ago, and is incomplete at that.

I think it will not be out of place to mention first some of the early American Collectors whom Mr. Greilsamer has overlooked. For instance, Mr. John P. Waters of Brooklyn, one of the earliest collectors of the violins of Stradivarius and Guarnerius; also Mr. R. D. Hawley, of Hartford, Connecticut, who formed a Collection which ranked in importance with many of the finest in Europe. To Mr. Waters belongs the distinction of having brought to this country the first fine Joseph del Gesù, known as the "King Joseph," in 1868, which he afterwards sold to Mr. R. D. Hawley and it formed a part of his collection, which at his death consisted of twelve fine instruments. The late Mr. Dwight J. Partello is not mentioned by Mr. Greilsamer, and Mr. Partello formed a very important collection. He lived abroad for many years and had opportunities of picking up from time to time choice examples as they became available. While he never went in for the very finest examples, nevertheless, his collection was made up of very excellent specimens.

In the last twenty years, conditions have changed very much in the Violin World—the day of the few large collections seems to have passed and in its place we find a large number of owners of two or three fine instruments. The rare pieces which formed the well-known collections have been in great part dispersed, many of them coming to America, and others going to private owners in other countries. We have at the present time in America between two hundred and two hundred and

fifty authentic Stradivari violins alone, and, I should say, more than our share of the fine Joseph Guarneri; and some of the very finest existing examples of both of these great makers have recently been brought here.

Complying with your suggestion I now give you a list of owners of two or more Stradivarii and Joseph Guarnerii:

Mr. John T. Roberts, Hartford, Conn. is the owner of the famous "Betts" Stradivari, dated 1704, unique in perfection of preservation and beauty of workmanship; also the David Laurie Joseph Guarneri dated 1738, one of the most charming examples I know;

while the names of other owners follow in alphabetical order:

- Mr. Max Adler, Chicago, Ill. A Stradivari of 1721, "ex Storm van Leeuwin," and another Stradivari of 1708.
- Mr. John H. Bennett, New York, N. Y. A Stradivari, "ex Des Rosiers," dated 1733; another, ex Dr. Joachim, dated 1714; the ex Spohr, 1724; also a Joseph Guarneri, 1725, ex Theodore Spiering, and a Joseph Guarneri, 1743, ex Wieniawski.
- Mrs. Mathews Bryant, Boston, Mass., owns two Stradivarii, one of 1694 and the other of 1721.
- Mrs. Wm. Clark, New York, N. Y., has the "Kreutzer" Stradivari of 1727 and another of 1692.
- Mr. Mischa Elman, New York, N. Y., recently acquired a fine Stradivari of 1717, known as the "Recamier," ex Molitor, and owns another of 1722.
- Mr. Henry Ford, Dearborn, Mich., owns a Stradivari, "Siberian," of 1709, and another of 1703, a beautiful Joseph Guarneri of 1741, ex Louis Doyen, a magnificent Carlo Bergonzi of 1740, a fine Nicolò Amati, and others.
- Mr. H. S. Grimes, New York, N. Y., owns two Stradivarii, both of the year 1727, one being the "ex Rode" and the other the "Nestor," on the label of which Stradivari signed himself as being in his eighty-third year.
- Mr. Joseph Haft, N. Y., owns the celebrated ex Woolhouse Stradivari of 1720, also the Stradivari of 1688, ex Derenberg, besides the "Spanish" Joseph Guarneri of 1739, and a Gasparo da Salò Viola in its original size and shape.
- Mr. Horace Havemeyer, New York, N. Y., owns a famous Guarneri, the "King Joseph," formerly in the Hawley Collection, which is dated 1737, also the "Kiesewetter" Stradivari of 1731, and another Stradivari of 1716.
- Mr. Jascha Heifetz, New York, N. Y., is the owner of a fine Joseph Guarneri of 1737, known as the "ex Ferdinand David," also a Stradivari, 1709.
- Mr. George F. Petinos, Philadelphia, owns a charming Stradivari, 1711, ex Hawley, and an Andreas Guarneri.
- Mr. John S. Phipps, New York, N. Y., is the owner of the celebrated "Duport" Stradivari Violoncello, dated 1711. He also owns the well-known Joseph Guarneri dated 1743, ex Leduc, as well as a Stradivari violin of 1722 known as the "Imperator."

- Mr. Raymond Petcairn, Philadelphia, Pa., owns a Stradivari of 1707, a Guarneri, and others.
- Mr. Herbert N. Straus, New York, N. Y., is, so far as I know, the first owner of a quartet of Stradivari instruments in the United States, and it consists of a Violin dated 1721, the "ex Count Archinto," a second violin of 1708, the "ex M. Soil," a magnificent Stradivari Viola of 1690, one of the rare things of the world, known as the "De Medici," which at one time formed part of a set of instruments made by Stradivari in 1690 for the Duke of Tuscany, and a Violoncello of 1690 known as the "L'Évêque."
- Mr. Alexander J. Stuart, Detroit, Mich., owns a Stradivari violin of 1729, a Stradivari Violoncello of 1731, a Viola by Cappa, and other instruments.
- Mr. David H. Walton, Brookline, Mass., owns a Stradivari, 1727, ex Zimbalist, a Stradivari, 1719, "Monasterio," a Stradivari, 1696, a Joseph Guarneri, 1743, ex Charles Reade, a Joseph Guarneri, 1734, and others.
- Mr. Rodman Wanamaker, New York, owns a collection of some fine Old Italian instruments, including the "Chant du Cygne" violin made in the last year of Stradivari's life, 1737, a Stradivari, 1710, ex Dancla, a Stradivari, 1723, a Stradivari, 1687, and others.
- Mr. Felix M. Warburg, New York, N. Y., owns a superb quartet of Stradivari instruments which includes the "Titian," 1715, the "Spanish," 1723, the "Lord MacDonald" viola, 1701, and the "ex Vaslin" 'Cello, 1725, all being superior examples.
- Mr. Rudolph H. Wurlitzer, Cincinnati, O., owns a quartet of Stradivari violins of the years 1690, 1698, 1717 and 1725; also a viola by Gasparo da Salo, 1560-70, and a collection of 19th century Italian makes.
- Mr. Efrem Zimbalist, New York, N. Y., owns one of the finest existing examples of the work of Stradivari, the well-known "Lamoureux" of the year 1735; also violins by Guadagnini, Montagnana and various other good makers.

A list of American owners of single Stradivari or Guarneri instruments, not to mention those made by other prominent Old Italian Makers, would be a long one,—altogether too long for you to publish!

Yours very truly,

JAY C. FREEMAN.

## THE MUSIC IN "DON QUIXOTE"

By EDGAR ISTEL

Señora, donde hay música, no puede haber cosa mala.<sup>1</sup>

THUS spoke to his faithful esquire, Sancho Pansa, the ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha: "For I desire that thou shouldst know, Sancho, that all or most of the knights errant of earlier times were great Troubadours and notable musicians; that these two arts or, rather, accomplishments are con-sorted with wandering lovers." And as Tristan enchanted his Isolde by the magic strains of the harp, as Amadis of Gaul, Don Olivante and Belianis of Greece sought to win the favor of their fair ones with sundry musical instruments, so Don Quixote, the true counterfeit or, rather, caricature of noble knighthood, who endeavored to imitate his great prototypes down to the least detail, had likewise to invoke the aid of music and raise his raucous voice at the propitious hour. And so, out of his knightly courtesy, our knight errant sings to verse of his own the romance for Altisidora with guitar-accompaniment—a scene brought to a ludicrous finale by cats harnessed with bells—and intones a madrigal to Dulcinea, his lady, which he accompanies with his sighs. The other characters in this immortal story of knighthood are also given to singing; the shepherd Antonio sings a romance, Cardenio a sonnet, the mule-driver *canzone*, the farm-laborers in Toboso ancient *cantares de gesta*, the *Caballero de los Espejos* (to the accompaniment of a *vihuela*, a sort of lute) a sonnet on Casilda de Vandalia; etc.

But all these songs bear no special relation either to the personality of Don Quixote or to the other individuals of the tale; they are merely the music that was generally cultivated in Spain towards the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. Those who would know how it sounded can gather no information on this head from the famous work of the great Cervantes:

Who the poet well would know,  
To the poet's land must go.

And whoever would acquaint himself with the music of Don Quixote must find his way into the musical *milieu* in which Cervantes lived.

<sup>1</sup>Madame, where music is, no evil thing can be. "Don Quixote," II, Chap. XXXIV.

With the art of polyphonic vocal music in three or four parts with instrumental accompaniment, such as was cultivated at that period, "Don Quixote" has nothing to do. The case is different as regards the vihuela-books printed in Spain from 1536 onward in imitation of the Italian Ottaviano dei Petrucci (1466-1539). Music-printing establishments were opened in Valencia, Valladolid, Sevilla, Alcalá de Henares and Madrid, which published, for the most part, collections of works by various composers, including romances, *proverbios*, *canciones*, *villancicos*, *endechas* and sonnets, almost always written in polyphonic style, the end of each verse being often provided with a fantasia executed by a solo instrument (possibly the forerunner of the Italian *fermata*, the *cadenza* improvised by *virtuosi*). The *danzas* (whereof more anon) and instrumental fantasias are usually in the form of *diferencias* (variations) on a theme.

We are safe in assuming that these canzone, at the time of Cervantes, were general favorites in educated circles—were "the fashion," as we would say now. Almost all the characters in the book who sing—Don Quixote himself, Sanson Carrasco, Cardenio, Don Luis, etc.—belong to the educated classes, and as they all sing romances, sonnets and madrigals (or villanescas), i. e., precisely what one finds in the vihuela-books, a notion of the musical *milieu* of Don Quixote can be obtained by consulting said books. It will be best to go back to the comparatively recently published collection "El Parnasso" of Esteban Daza (Valladolid, 1578). True, as Cecilio de Roda has already noted,<sup>1</sup> "Don Quixote" was published some decades (1605-15) later than Daza's collection, and the somewhat "learned" style of these compositions apparently militates against their ready popularization. We must remember, however, that music was not then developing with the hectic speed of to-day, so that a few decades meant no more than a lustrum means now; furthermore, music occupied an important place in academic study (the universities of Salamanca and Alcalá had chairs of music), and, as only music in the polyphonic style was heard, the educated classes could gradually familiarize themselves with it.

Concerning the style of these compositions we have to observe, besides, that the Spanish masters of the sixteenth century were more strongly influenced by the Netherland composers than by the Italian school of Caccini and Peri, and that the Protestant chorale of Germany did not exercise the slightest effect upon them.

<sup>1</sup>"Ilustraciones del Quijote," Madrid, 1905. To these lectures by my deceased friend, held in the Ateneo at Madrid, I owe very many valuable suggestions.

Their procedure consisted principally in writing in correct musical style and faithfully following the sense of the poetic text; that is (to employ a modern term), in a species of "expressionism."

As specimens of this musical style, three compositions from Esteban Daza's collection are given below. The first is the begin-

### Villanesca

*d. 76*

Pra - do ver - dey flo - ri - do, Pra - do

*p*

ver - dey flo - ri - do, fuen - te cla - ra, a -

le - gres ar bo - le - das y som - bri - as, pues

*poco cres. dim. p*

veis las pe - nas mi - as ca - da ho - ra. etc.

*Literal translation*

Green and flowery meadows, clear rill, pleasant, shadowy trees,  
at every hour ye behold my torments.

ning of a madrigal (villanesca) after the manner of Don Quixote's own songs. It is the work of one of the most important Spanish

church-composers, Francisco Guerrero (b. Sevilla, 1528, d. there 1599), whose works, with a biography, have been published by Pedrell in Vol. II of his "Hispaniæ Schola Musica Sacra." It shows that this severe church-composer could also write very amorous music.

The second piece was written by Estaban Daza himself,

### Romance

En - - fer - mo es - ta - ba An - ti - o - co Prin - ci -

pe - de la Su - ri - - a, de Es - tra to -

ni - ce la ref - - na - fe - - ri - do de

a - mor - ya - ci - a ya - ci - - - a.

*Literal translation*

Ill was Antiochus, Prince of Syria, of longing for Stratonice  
the queen; wounded by love, he lay full long

and is a highly typical heroico-declamatory romance. (There were two kinds of romance, the amatory and the chevaleresque.)

Finally, the third piece (of which only the beginning is quoted):

### Soneto

*J. 44*

Ayl mu - do soy, ha - blar no pue - - do,

*p* *riten.* *a tempo*

mue - ro por ha - blar lo que he - sen - ti - do, Se - ño - ra,

si me fue - se - con-ce - di - do, con-ce - di - - - do. etc.

*Literal translation*

Ah! mute am I, I may not speak, 'twill be my death, Lady,  
should I say what I have felt, had I permission.

is a sonnet composed by Pedro Ordóñez, an almost unknown sixteenth-century musician (even Riemann's *Musiklexikon* fails to mention him in its latest edition), who finds a place only in the "Diccionario biográfico de efemerides de músicos españoles" (1860) of Baldasar Saldoni (b. Barcelona, 1807, d. there 1890), with the added remark that he has been praised by Italian composers. This sonnet is peculiarly noteworthy by reason of its faithful reflection of the various poetic passages, which are musically depicted with well-nigh exaggerated solicitude. Consider, at the

beginning, the words "mudo soy" (I am dumb), and further on:

Di-ces me que no te ha-ble, mas he mie-do

en tan gran-de si-len-cio ser per-di-do.

*pp*

*Literal translation*

Thou sayest, I must not speak to thee, but I fear  
to be lost in so vast a silence.

"dices me que no te hable, mas he miedo en tan grande silencio ser perdido" (thou sayest, I must not speak to thee, but I fear to be lost in so great a silence).

So much for the vocal music in "Don Quixote," which belongs, as aforesaid, altogether in the sphere of polyphonic art as practised by the cultivated classes. The instrumental music of the people presents a wholly different aspect. It is rhythmically more interesting, its evolution having been strongly influenced by contributions from Arab and Gypsy sources, and in the end, by dint of its primitive energy, it superseded the monotonous vocal art of the courts, founded on the modes of the Greeks and the Church.

The still popular Spanish folk-music, known abroad chiefly through the shallow imitations of the "music-halls—the music that is cherished more especially by Gypsies in its homeland, Andalusia—bears the singular name "cante flamenco" in the Gypsy tongue. Regarding the true origin of this music there has been much discussion. According to one hypothesis it was, as the above name implies, originally "Flemish" music, imported into Spain (possibly by Gypsies) during the reign of Charles V, i. e., in the first half of the sixteenth century; in Spain it lost much of its primal character, being mingled with the native Andalusian music and the aggressive art of the Moorish invaders. Again, the very marked Oriental characteristics of this "flamenco" music gave

rise to the not at all improbable conjecture that it was, in reality, of Arabian origin, brought to Spain by real Flemings from the Netherlands or by Flemish Gypsies entering Spain with Bohemian troops. However this may be, it is remarkable that the Gypsies are called "flamencos" by the Andalusians, while the former call the Andalusians "gachos," and that the flamenco-music perfectly reflects the melancholy, sombre Gypsy mood. Pedrell also inclines to the belief that the flamenco-music is of Oriental origin: "Whoever, like myself, has heard the songs of the Russian Gypsies (at the Paris Exposition, 1878); has studied the Tunesian songs; and, together with Anton Rubinstein, who showed a lively interest in Spanish folk-music, has been able to prove the astounding analogy of the songs of the Gypsies and Tunesians with those of the Andalusians, will doubt for a moment that the Oriental origin of this music is highly probable." (*Cancionero musical popular español*, Vol. II). But, as Pedrell points out, a positive solution of the problem is impossible. I embrace this opportunity to observe that O. von Riesemann's remarks in his admirable "Monographien zur russischen Music" (Munich, 1923, Vol. I, p. 165 ff) on Glinka's trip to Spain and his study of the flamenco-music are of peculiar interest to-day in their bearing on the connection between Spanish and Russian folk-music. Von Riesemann errs, however, in one important point. Glinka ascribed the authorship of his variations on the "Jota aragonesa" to a Spanish guitar-player, Felix Castillo; this von Riesemann terms an "almost morbid modesty," proceeding thus: "The orchestra of Glinka and—a guitar (!) are two such wholly incommensurable quantities that, of all the contrapuntal witchcraft and all the impossibly clever, startlingly original instrumental effects that Glinka . . . lavishes on this score, not even the meagrest suggestions would be possible on such a poverty-stricken [?!] instrument as the guitar." Such an assertion could be made by von Riesemann only because he, like most Central and Eastern Europeans, had never heard the marvelous orchestral treatment that the foremost Spanish guitar-players display in their use of the so-styled "poverty-stricken" instrument. Glinka studied, in particular, the guitarist Francisco Rodriguez Marciano, whose printed compositions exhibit the individualistic guitar-style of the man. (Cf. "Glinka in Granada," in Pedrell's above-cited work.)

Down to the beginning of the sixteenth century, instrumental music played no important rôle in Spain. This was due in part to the primitive construction of the instruments, and in part to the fact that everyone who called himself a musician esteemed only

the sacred polyphonic music and despised popular tunes. Dances were danced to vocal music, at first in three to four parts, then with the voice-parts doubled by instruments. Later the dance was timed by only a single voice singing to an independent accompaniment, which latter, still treated in the style of vocal polyphony, carried within itself the melody or vocal part as an inner part. The contempt of the members of the musical guild for folk-music went so far, that the popular instruments found no mention in any learned work on music; whereas Cervantes, a man of the people, interested himself exclusively for such instruments. Still, it is possible by making comparisons to arrive at a fairly adequate idea of the folk-music and its instruments in "Don Quixote." Cervantes published the second part of his knightly tale, the first half of which yields but little to musical research, in the year 1615. Two years before, the Hispanicized Italian, Domenico Pietro Cerone (b. Bergamo, 1566) had brought out his work, "El melopeo y maestro, tractado de musica teórica y práctica," in the twenty-first chapter of which the instrumental practice of the time is reviewed.

Cervantes classifies the instruments as pastoral, military, popular, and aristocratic.

Among the pastoral instruments he mentions in the first place the "rabel," the sole bowed instrument found in "Don Quixote." It is analogous to the rebec (the Arabian *rebab*), with three strings tuned in fourths and fifths from below upward. This instrument, which was played only in Spain and France, is said to have been brought to Spain by Moors in the eighth century; but perhaps it became known to the Moors only after their conquest of Spain. It was employed solely to accompany songs; thus it was used by the shepherd Antonio to accompany his romance to Olalla, and by Anselmo, the disdained lover of Leandra. The shepherds played this instrument in its primitive form; later, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the "Reyes Católicos," it was admitted to court.

When Don Quixote, worsted by the "Caballero de la Blanca Luna," withdraws into his humble cot and rhapsodizes over life in the country, he also depicts the delights of music to Sancho Pansa: "By the Lord, friend Sancho, what a life we shall lead! How the *churumbelas* will resound in our ears, and the *gaytas* and the tambourines, and the *sonajas*, and *rabeles*! And when the *albogues* are added to these various instruments, we shall have nearly all the pastoral instruments." That all these, with one exception, were then very popular, is evidenced by Sancho's query:

"What are albogues? For I have never heard of them, nor ever seen them in all my life!" "Albogues," replied Don Quixote, "are two concave plates, much like the stands of brass candlesticks, and struck one against the other, producing a sound that is not remarkably pleasant and harmonious, and yet consorts well with the rusticity of the *gayta* and tambourine; and this name, albogues, is Moorish." Thus, the *albogues*, which were obviously of Moorish origin, are identical with what are now called *platillos* (cymbals) in Spain, the familiar instrument of percussion in orchestras and military bands, though then somewhat smaller, and made of brass. The other instruments mentioned by Don Quixote are the shawm (*churumela*), the bagpipe (*gayta Zamorana*) with two drones, and the tabor with jingles (*sonaja*), all together composing a rustic orchestra of quite characteristic color.

Military instruments were numerous employed for the disenchantment of Dulcinea, such as trumpets, fifes, cornets and sundry kinds of horns which, in improved forms, are still in use. The fifes, for example, are played to-day in the band of the Royal Halbardiers (Real Cuerpo de Alabarderos).

In the *retablo* (altar-piece) by Maese Pedro are shown *dulzainas* and *atabales*. The former are a species of oboe; the latter are Moorish kettle-drums, that were played on horseback, and still appear at the annual announcement of the Papal Bull as traditional adjuncts.

In several situations (e. g., at Sancho's reception on the island) *chirimias* are introduced—wood-wind instruments resembling our oboes and clarinets, with nine holes, of which only six are stopped by the fingers. These instruments are still employed in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, and in the seventeenth century were peculiar favorites at festivals; they are also frequently mentioned in Calderon's plays.

At Camacho's wedding there appear flutes, tambourines, psalteries, *albogues*, *panderos* (sort of tabor with jingles), *gaytas Tamoranas*, and *sonajas*. Besides the pastoral instruments proper to the *milieu*, only flutes, psalteries and *panderos* need be mentioned as independent instruments. "The flutes (so runs one passage) gave forth a soft, pleasing tone which, as it was not overborne by the human voice, had a tender, amorous effect." Among the various primitive forms of the flute, whereof the fife alone is still extant, those mentioned in "Don Quixote" belong to the "recorder" (*flute à bec*) group, known in Spain as *flautas dulces* (soft-toned flutes), with flat, bent mouthpieces and six holes of differing size, as described by the learned French monk, Marin

Mersenne (1588-1648) in his treatise. "Cogitata physico-mathematica" (Paris, 1644) under the caption "Instrumenta pneumatica."

The psaltery (*salterio*) was once in great vogue as the finest instrument after the organ. It was, perhaps, the precursor of the spinet and virginal, in which mechanical devices effected what the fingers performed on the psaltery. It had already won popularity when Pablo Minguet described it in a treatise published in 1754 at Madrid (no earlier Spanish descriptions are extant). This depicts it as triangular, the sides bevelled on top, with strings varying in number (usually twenty-three), stretched parallel to the base of the triangle, and resting on movable bridges that permitted exact tuning. The instrument was played with both hands, and the player carried it suspended from his neck.

We are better informed with regard to the other instruments mentioned in "Don Quixote"—harps, *vihuelas*, flutes and guitars.

The harp was then, as now, the aristocratic instrument for ladies. Dorotea employed, as a soul-restorative, either some pious book or the strains of her harp; for, as she told the priest and the barber, "Experience has shown me that music tranquilizes the most disordered spirit." In other passages, too, in Cervantes' romance the harp always companions a lady. In the sixteenth century, this instrument was also a prime favorite among men; it was minutely described by the Spanish monk Juan Bermudo in his "Declaración de instrumentos musicos" (Ossuna, 1549-55), Book IV, Chap. 87. It was still diatonic, as the pedal was not invented until 1720.

The *vihuela* is the typical Spanish instrument of the sixteenth century. It was the prototype of the present-day guitar, which it greatly resembled; it was assiduously cultivated by the upper classes, thus giving rise to a new and original literature. From 1536, when Luis Milán published his celebrated collection, down to 1578, when the collection of Hernando de Cabezón appeared, eminent composers—among them the above-mentioned Esteban Daza—vied in their attentions to this instrument, for which they wrote pavaues, galliards, and other dances, or instrumental accompaniments for romances, sonnets, and the like, of which I have already given specimens. Bermudo, and the blind professor of Salamanca Francisco Salinas (1513-90) in his "De musica libri VII" (1577), give careful descriptions of the instrument. According to these, the ordinary vihuela possessed six "ordenes" or "clases" of strings tuned from below upward as follows: sol-do-

fa-la-re-sol. There were also other tunings, and seven-stringed and small vihuelas. After the introduction of the guitar, which speedily gained enormous popularity, the vihuela retired into the background. But from the year 1586, when Dr. Juan Carlos Amat brought out his first guitar-book (without music), until nearly a century later, when Gregorio Sanz published his important work "Instrucción de musica sobre la guitarra española" (Saragossa, 1674), there appeared no book in Spanish on either the guitar or the vihuela; hence a wide and unfillable hiatus in guitar-literature. Amat's work, "Guitarra española y vandola en dos maneras de guitarra castellana y catalana de cinco órdenes" (published anonymously at Gerona, 1586), gives the best idea of the guitar in use during the time of Cervantes. It is the same kind of guitar which, with slight variations, held its own in Spain down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. This guitar had nine strings tuned pairwise (all but the first) to precisely the same scale as the modern instrument; the first string by itself, then the first pair in unison, then a second pair, then a third pair tuned in octaves, and then a fourth pair also tuned in octaves. The *bordon* was not in use at that period.

The popularity of the guitar is often attested in the pages of "Don Quixote." I shall note only a few instances. The knight who was in love with Princess Antonomasia de Candaya was the possessor, according to the Dueña Dolorida, of most varied talents; he was a poet, a great dancer, and "so played the guitar that he made it speak." Don Quixote himself, in the passage quoted above, reckons with the barber, "because all or most barbers are guitarists and copla-singers." We perceive that Figaro had many forerunners.

In "Don Quixote" an important rôle is played by the dances, which were classified in sixteenth-century Spain as aristocratic dances; dances with much action ("de cuenta") or real *danzas*; then popular dances, dances with jingles or *bailes*; and finally mixed dances. All these are mentioned by Cervantes.

Taking up the last-named first, they divide into two groups: the purely pantomimic, and the "spoken" (*habladas*) dances. Both are scenic in character, little comedies played in the open, either on a green or in the market-place of a town. In Camacho's wedding ("Don Quixote," II, Chap. 20) occurs a very interesting and minutely detailed account of a dance of the second group:

After them came an artistic dance, one of the kind known as "dramatic" [*danzas habladas*, spoken dances, i. e., pantomimes intermingled with songs]. It was executed by eight Nymphs, divided into two groups.

The former escorted the god Cupid; the latter, a personification of Gain. Cupid was bedight with wings, bow, quiver and arrows; Gain was arrayed in a wealth of gold and silk of many colors. The nymphs escorting Cupid bore on their shoulders a white parchment whereon the name of each was writ in great letters; "Poetry" was the title of the first; the second was named "Wit"; the third, "Good Lineage"; the fourth, "Bravery." Similarly marked were those accompanying Gain. "Generosity" was the first; "Gift," the second; "Treasure," the third; and the fourth, "Undisturbed Possession." Before them all went a wooden tower drawn by four savages clad with ivy and green-dyed hemp. In front of the tower, and on each of its sides, there was writ, "Tower of Good Conduct." Four skilful tambourine-players and flutists accompanied the dance. Cupid led the ballet; he danced twice forward and back, then lifted up his eyes and aimed a dart at a maiden standing between the battlements of the tower. To her he addressed the following verses. . . . When he had finished the verses, he let fly a dart toward the top of the tower, and retired to his station. Thereupon Gain came forward and made two turns forward and back, and, the tambourines ceasing to play, spoke thus. . . . Gain now retired and "Poetry" advanced; after carrying out her evolutions like the others, she gazed up at the maiden on the tower, and said . . . "Poetry" withdrew, and "Generosity" left the group of Gain to execute similar evolutions, then saying. . . .

In like manner all the figures came forward out of the quadrilles and returned to them; each making her evolutions and saying her verses some of which were elegant, while others were comical. . . . Then they all mingled in a dance, intertwining and interlinking in an unrestrained and charming fashion; and whensoever Cupid passed by the tower, he aimed a dart at the top; but Gain threw gilded balls thereat. [These were so-called *alcancias*, i. e., clay balls filled with flowers, water, or ashes, like those thrown at each other by the knights at a tourney—a usage originating with the Moors]. At last, after they had danced a long while, Gain grasped a great purse seemingly filled with money, and hurled it at the tower; at the same instant all the walls fell down, and the maiden stood revealed and defenseless. Instantly, Gain approached together with his train; they hung a great gold chain about her neck, and made as though they would take her prisoner and carry her off with them. As Cupid and his companions noted this, they hastened to attack them and set the maiden free; and everything they sought to do went on to the sound of the tambourines, all participants dancing together and moving in time to the music. Now the savages intervened to restore peace, coming forward with great haste and setting up the walls of the tower again. So the maiden was once more ensconced therein, whereupon the ballet took its close amid the applause of all spectators.

It will be seen that music, as such, played no specially significant part in these ballets; it was merely a part of the pantomimic composite. To the affiliated species of purely representative dance belongs one shortly preceding the above at Camacho's wedding and described by Cervantes as follows:

Twelve beautiful maidens entered, who were so young, that none seemed under fourteen, neither had any reached eighteen. All were clad in green, their hair in part braided, in part loose, and all so golden that they well might vie with the beams of the sun. On their heads they wore wreaths of jessamine, roses, amaranth and woodbine. They were escorted by a worshipful old man and a matron, who were, however, lighter and livelier than one should expect of their years. A bagpipe (*gayta Zamorana*) played up, and with all decorum in mien and gaze and buoyance of feet they approved themselves the best dancers in the world.

Dances of this description, the precursors of our scenic ballets, were in high favor in Spain during the seventeenth century.

Likewise mentioned at Camacho's wedding, though not described in detail, were the sword-dances known in Spain from the earliest times and portrayed by Livy. Their vogue was greatest in the kingdom of Toledo; they were performed by farm-laborers in smocks and linen knee-breeches, who bore in their hand white swords (in contrast with the black swords with pommels—rapiers—used in fencing). With these swords they executed artistic evolutions, particularly one called *la degallada*, in which they ostensibly tried to cut off their leader's head, a fate which he eluded most gracefully. Roda saw this dance performed as late as the end of the nineteenth century in the streets of Madrid at Carnival-time, the men wielding wooden swords and exhibiting wonderful dexterity.

In "Don Quixote" it is said of Camacho, "He also has companies of dancers, both with swords and with bells, (for in his village there are such,) in shaking and leaping with which they display most admirable dexterity; of the sole-slappers (*zapateadores*) I shall say nothing, for everyone knows that he has not failed to procure the very finest." The sole-slappers marked the time for the dancers by striking their soles alternately with their hands; the bell-dancers wore little bells on their arms and legs and shook them in dancing, while singing nonsensical verses.

Whereas, in the *danzas* the feet alone were active, the body being held perfectly quiet, in the *bailes* (to which the bell-dances belonged) the arms and body were brought into fullest play. Of these *bailes* the *zarabanda* was the most wanton. The worthy Pater Mariana, in his "Tratado contra los juegos publicos," fulminates against this dance, "so lascivious in the words and so disgusting in the motions that it makes decent folk blush for shame." But what did it avail that here and there some priest condemned it? In the half-century from 1580 to 1630 the dancing mania had seized upon the entire population, and "Zarabanda!" was the cry raised by the dancers gathering in streets and squares. Indeed,

the zarabanda even invaded the churches in its naked musical form, made presentable only by an investiture of sacred words instead of the objectionable refrains. Similarly, some centuries earlier, the very profane "homme armé" had been brought into the church by the contrapuntists. With the zarabanda a number of other favorite dances entered the church, of which we shall mention only the chacona and pasacalle as german to our purpose. As early as 1598, the city of Madrid besought Philip II to sanction only the good old dances and forbid the new, lascivious ones, and finally, in 1630, the zarabanda was actually prohibited by the Royal Council of Castile. By that time, however, the zarabanda had really been dethroned by the seguidillas and the chacona, which were still gayer and more voluptuous, more particularly the latter, whose name was possibly derived from Chaco, a district in Argentina. The seguidillas, too, are often spoken of in "Don Quixote," for instance by Dueña Dolorida.

The division into *bailes* and *danzas* was theoretical rather than practical. In reality there was a continual process of blending, aristocratic dances being vulgarized and folk-dances refined, so that finally the *folias* and *villanos* figured in both categories. The difference was due entirely to the manner of performance; the *danzas* were executed lightly and cleverly, but with the feet alone; the *bailes* were thoroughly lascivious, the whole body coming into action. This throws light on the remarks addressed in self-defense to Don Quixote by Sancho, in which he emphasizes the difficulties of "bailar" as contrasted with the ease of "danzar." And Doña Rodriguez praises her daughter's talents to Don Quixote with the words, "She sings like a lark, dances (*danza*) light as fancy, and capers (*baile*) like a shameless trollop."

When we broach the question, how the music to these dances may have looked, we should remember that artists at first felt nothing but contempt for such music of the populace; and, when they condescended to take over the popular titles, made them over into learned and quasi sacred pieces. Instrumental music, however, soon cut adrift from vocal music. The aristocracy danced to small orchestras (harpsichords, lutes, harps, etc.), while the commonalty retained their songs with guitar-accompaniment. Even though a considerable space intervenes between the dates of publication of "Don Quixote" and Gregorio Sanz's "Instrucción de musica sobre la guitarra española" (Saragossa, 1674), this latter furnishes the best attainable view of the folk-music as practised at the time of Cervantes, no such rapid alterations as at present being possible at that period. The music of Sanz is

thoroughly Spanish, and its turns and cadences are typically Andalusian to this very day. We find phrases that Sanz evidently did not invent himself, but set down in accord with tradition. And as Cervantes, like his contemporary, the great Briton Shakespeare, was a man who had "music in himself," his fine discernment preferred the folk-music to art-music; and therefore we have to seek that music which reflects the folk-music in "Don Quixote."

Sanz's music is written for guitar, though not for the modern instrument, but the contemporary guitar, which had two strings for each note and a correspondingly fuller tone. As examples of the *danzas* we give below the beginnings of a *gallarde* and a *folía*; as types of the *bailes*, a *zarabanda* and a *chacona in extenso*. The *gallarde* was the royal dance; like the pavane it was stately and measured. The way in which it was danced is described by Calderon in "El maestro de danzar," Act II, Scene 25, with the musically interesting commentary: "And always, with an ear attentive to the measure, emphasize all the cadences without attitudinizing."

## Guitar

## Gallarda



The *folía* is a more agile dance, with all sorts of twists and caprioles; this may well have been the dance performed by Don Quixote in the house of Antonio Moreno. It is typically Spanish, and quite in the modern Andalusian style.

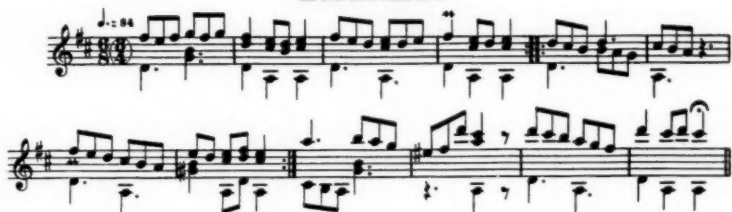
## Folías



The *zarabanda* of the Spaniards has nothing to do with the French *sarabande*, whose rhythm is familiar to us through the

Suites of the eighteenth century. The Spanish dance is the older, and gave the French dance its name, but not its character or rhythm. The zarabanda of Sanz which follows is especially interesting in its rhythm, 6/8 and 3/4 alternating in singular fashion. These rhythms were carried over to America by the little caravels that formerly conducted the overseas traffic, and were brought back again by steamers as something characteristically South-American (the so-called *guajiras*):

### Zarabanda



In closing I insert a chacona, the favorite style of dance in Cervantes' time. Its rhythm is exactly the same as that of the modern chacona of Granada; and, besides this, it shows an affinity with the Praeludium of the Violin Sonata in E major by Bach, and in various aspects reminds us of Bach's own Chaconnes.

### Guitar

### Chacona





Thus we can trace a peculiar connection between Spanish folk-art at the time of Cervantes (beginning of the seventeenth century) and the inimitable polyphony of the unfathomable German master, who was not born until near the end of that century.

*(Translated by Theodore Baker.)*

## WHAT IS SACRED MUSIC?

By ORLANDO A. MANSFIELD

**B**Y all who are keeping in close touch with modern musical developments it will readily be admitted that we are living in an age in which music is receiving no small amount of attention. But whatever we may think about the quantity of this attention, its quality undoubtedly leaves very much to be desired. By the world in general, music is too often regarded as an amusement, rather than as a matter for serious and delightful study, or as a means towards edification. By the church it is frequently treated as an advertisement, an attraction, or a performance, rather than as an aid to worship and to communion with the Unseen. Indeed, both the church and the world would be the better for a remembrance of the words of Thomas Carlyle, to the effect that "Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite; we look for moments across the cloudy elements, into the eternal Sea of Light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of Nature, have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine. Their singer was a *vates*, admitted to the council of the universe, friend of the gods, and choicest benefactor to man." With this agrees in substance the statement of Joseph Addison in his Song for St. Cecilia's Day:

Music, the greatest good that mortals know,  
And all of heaven we have below;

while Charles Kingsley goes a step further than Carlyle, and declares that although conscious that music has been called the speech of angels, he will venture to term it "the speech of God Himself," or, as Canon Shuttleworth once expressed it, "the voice of God to the soul."

Accepting, for the sake of argument, the accuracy of these statements concerning the importance of music in the life of the individual and the nation, it follows that any serious discussion respecting so divine an Art cannot be absolutely useless even if inadequately directed. But, as no controversy can be satisfactorily conducted unless preceded by a clear definition of terms,

it is essential that we should state at the very outset what meaning we intend to attach to the word "sacred" before we proceed to couple it with the term "music." Here the derivation of the word will help us. As almost everybody knows, it is derived from the Latin *sacer*, an adjective meaning holy, or consecrated. Hence, from the original and heathen notion of something set apart for, or consecrated to, the worship of the gods, the word in its best sense is now taken to mean something directly pertaining to Divine worship—music suitable for, or appropriate to, religious places, purposes, and occasions.

Having thus defined our terms, and observed that the title of our subject is expressed in the form of a question, we purpose, first of all, to examine the various answers which have been made to that question, and to observe wherein these replies may be considered to be inaccurate, or inadequate. Thus we shall be proceeding *analytically*, or indulging in a course of destructive criticism, in order to show what music is *not* sacred. Then we shall attempt to frame a reply to the question embodied in our subject, such reply to be in accordance with our accepted definition of sacred music. Thus we shall be proceeding *synthetically*, employing a process of constructive criticism in order to show what sacred music really is. Lastly, we will endeavour to state very briefly what general musical forms are in accordance with the terms of our reply, naming, if possible, a few musical compositions characteristic of each form. Thus we shall be proceeding *synoptically*, making a comprehensive criticism of such general forms and particular compositions as are really sacred, or, in other words, are "suitable for religious places, purposes, and occasions."

Perhaps the best answer to our selected question is that which would make sacred music a matter of *quality*, and assert that all good music is sacred. Along positive lines this view was admirably stated by the late Professor Sir George Macfarren. He is credited with the assertion that all music should be regarded as sacred which had been composed "with a high artistic aim and purpose." With Macfarren agreed the late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, who is stated to have affirmed that "All good music is sacred, and all bad music execrably unsacred." Then, on the negative side, we have Mr. Franklin Peterson, the late Professor of Music in the University of Melbourne. He declares that "there is no such thing as sacred music." This view was stated conversely by the late Rev. E. Husband, who at one time combined in himself the appointment of incumbent and organist of St. Michael's, Folkestone, England. He said, "There is no such

thing as secular music. Music cannot be divided into sacred and secular—it is one. Music is music, or it is not. Bad music is not really music, but a horrible, insipid imitation—a desecration of a divine thing." This is not altogether unlike the remark attributed to Rossini, "I recognize only two kinds of music—the good and the bad."

Now when one authority denies that there is such a thing as sacred music, another declares there is no such thing as secular, and a third casts a doubt upon the existence of them both, it would seem as if, to use the words of Brer Tarrypin, "There's a mighty 'eap o' mixedness in this 'ere dispute." Yet if there is one opinion more than another which tends to dispose of the view that all good music is suitable for religious purposes, it is the opinion of St. Paul, to the effect that even if all things are "lawful, all things are not expedient," and "all things edify not." There is an enormous amount of really good music which, however lawful, is expedient for performance neither in religious places, nor upon religious occasions, and would, most certainly, be anything but edifying, if so rendered. For instance, the elder Strauss wrote some exquisite waltzes, and Sir Arthur Sullivan some excellent comic operas. These of their class are certainly good music. But are they sacred? Are they suitable for religious places, purposes, and occasions? Surely not. As Mr. Cuthbert Hadden remarks, "This absurd contention that all good music is sacred is, really, an abuse of language. One might as well argue that, because they are both good, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the 53rd chapter of Isaiah are both equally sacred." On this point, the Rev. F. L. Wiseman, of Birmingham, England, maintains the character implied in his family name by observing that "The idea that *all* instrumental music, as not being associated with words, may be viewed as sacred, is highly erroneous. Not a little provokes thoughts and awakens emotions entirely foreign and even repugnant to Christian sentiment. . . . Music, like all speech, has its 'bad language' and jestings which are not convenient." The "quality" theory must, therefore, be dismissed as being plausible rather than Scriptural.

A second answer to our question would make sacred music a matter of *temperament*—something dependent upon the spiritual or mental condition of the hearer. To this emotional theory, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher must have been partial, since he is reported as having said: "All good music is sacred if it be heard sacredly." Or, as the late Rev. W. Feaston, of Birmingham, England, once remarked, "Music is alone sacred when accepted

in spiritual recognition and in sacred gratitude." Now both these statements have much to commend them to our acceptance. For the Scriptures assure us that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." And, there can be no doubt that much music is regarded as secular, that is to say, unsuitable for religious purposes, simply because the musical and mental faculties of the hearer are in a most elementary stage of development. But, surely, no degree of musical, mental, or even moral preparedness should render us capable of regarding the music of the stage, or of the dancing class, as suitable for performance in the sanctuary. And even if such a state of mind were desirable, we should still be "up against" the Apostolic teaching to the effect that, while "all things indeed are pure," "it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." As Professor Hadow says, in his *Studies in Modern Music*, "Music is not articulate, but it is suggestive, and its suggestion should always be in keeping with the conditions under which it is intended to be heard. Hence, to import into the church music which is in obvious keeping with the theatre or the ballroom is to outrage composer and audience alike."

But some may ask, and pertinently too, are we not tilting against what Thomas Carlyle would have called an "extinct Satan?" Does any reasonable or responsible individual really propose to perform operatic or dance music in our churches in these days of grace? Not knowingly, perhaps, yet we have seen in America whole collections of Sunday School music consisting of nothing but adaptations from more or less popular operas. For instance, there is the hymn-tune "Weber," which was at one time very popular in England and still is in America. This feeble tune is taken from the Chorus of Fairies in Weber's *Oberon*, and, as one critic remarks, is "spoilt in the taking." A much worse case than this is that of the hymn-tune known as "Rousseau's Dream." This was actually derived from a dance to be found in the eighth scene of an opera, *The Village Sorcerer*, composed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau—an opera which kept the stage for nearly 70 years after its first appearance in 1752, and enjoyed more than 400 representations, until it was practically laughed off the locality of its former triumphs. The feeble melody found its way to England, where it was arranged, as an Air with Variations, for the pianoforte, by that celebrated pianist and composer, J. B. Cramer, in 1812. There is a "tradition of the elders" to the effect that the tune derived its name because it was the identical melody played

to the composer by no less a personage than the devil himself. But this is obviously "out of it," and that for two reasons. In the first place, the devil, if an individual, would be far too clever to tempt any musician with such a wretched tune. And in the second place, there is some confusion here with Tartini's celebrated sonata, "Il Trillo del Diavolo," concerning which a similar story is told with infinitely greater probability. Perhaps it is just as well that we are not sure who arranged Rousseau's miserable little tune and foisted it upon the services of the Christian churches in England and America. Most likely, it was the work of some misguided amateur in the earlier half of the last century, when the rage for hymn-tune adaptations was at its height.

And not only are we requested to attune our mental faculties to the toleration of operatic and dance music in church, and to "accept it always, and in all places, with all thankfulness," but in the so-called "English" Hymnal, which is English only in name, we are called upon to endorse as sacred music folk-songs of recognized secular origin. Concerning these, a writer in a former issue of "The Organist and Choirmaster" remarks:

A popular folk-song tune, when patched on to sacred words, inevitably carries the profane atmosphere of the village pothouse (where for centuries it has lived and had its being) into the sacred interior of the very church itself. You can positively *smell* the beer and bad tobacco and see the sanded floor and spittoons of the bar of the village tavern when you play or sing . . . some of these tunes. Mr. Martin Shaw does not object to the use of profane tunes in church if they are not known as such in the neighbourhood in which they are sung. But in these days, when "many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased," who can say of any congregation that it does not contain one person who is capable of perceiving the profane associations and atmosphere of a folk-song tune he hears sung in church?

Moreover, as the Rev. F. L. Wiseman further remarks, "Some melodies are so inherently flippant and vulgar, others so unrestrained and sensual, as to render their conversion (to religious places, purposes, and occasions) impossible." Accordingly, having discarded the "quality" theory as merely plausible, we reject the "temperamental" theory as being nothing more or less than emotional.

Another opinion—that only that music is really sacred which has been *expressly composed* for religious purposes—is by no means unpopular. But, unfortunately, this is equivalent to saying that all church music is sacred, a statement which no well-read or well-informed church musician would accept for one moment. As a practical instance of the fallacy of this theory, we have only to

point to those very silly tunes, "hybrid compounds of melody and tum-tum," as one writer calls them, which adorn the pages of all our mission hymnals. These were certainly designed for nothing but employment in sacred connections; but most of them are so poor in melodic construction, so defective in rhythm, and so ungrammatical in harmony, that to call them "sacred" would be to perpetrate one of the grossest perversions of terms ever possible. Such tunes should never be tolerated by those who believe with St. Paul, that all things should be "done unto edifying." Professor Peter Christian Lutkin, of the North Western University, Evanston, Illinois, strikes the right note when he says, "I firmly believe that, in the course of a revival, a really great artist could make more effect with Mendelssohn's, "But the Lord is mindful of His own," than could possibly be made by the revival songs manufactured for the occasion. . . . It is an open question whether the superficial and ephemeral character of the means employed does not promote religious feelings of a similar sort, and whether a stronger and more wholesome musical diet would not produce a more substantial religious product." It certainly would. We have tried it, and gladly bear our testimony to its absolutely beneficent effect. Besides, if any music expressly composed for church use be deemed suitable for religious purposes, then any senseless farrago, or the merest intellectual drivel, would suffice for a sermon, and should be permitted to be delivered from any pulpit, provided the speaker could prove that his feeble and flimsy utterances were expressly intended for delivery in religious connections only. Wherefore, the "purpose" theory of sacred music is absurd.

The fourth answer to our question makes the matter one of *associations*. Says the Editor of "The New Music Review," "A hand-organ may play a merry or foolish tune in the street and the watchers by the bed of the dying, hearing the tune, will never afterwards think lightly of it." Hence the difficulty which an earnest church musician experiences when he endeavours to substitute good music, unfamiliar to his congregation, in place of some worthless rubbish with which is associated, in the minds of its hearers, some undoubtedly real and, it may be, profound religious experience. An editor of "The Christian Commonwealth" once said that "when used in religious association and connection, the mind is influenced by the music thus used so as to regard it as sacred." Unmusical people are frequently deluded in this way, but musicians rarely, if ever. But in one case, they certainly were caught napping—the case of the hymn-tune,

"Helmsley." This tune has been for many long years "indissolubly joined" to the Advent hymn, "Lo! He comes with clouds descending"; and, as such, it was a great favourite with Queen Victoria, who, on one occasion, took Sir Walter Parratt to task for substituting a more modern composition for it. Now "Helmsley" is a good representative of the old "curly" or florid tunes; but to sticklers for the "association" theory it was, until quite recently, nothing less than anathema. For these good people imagined that the tune was derived from a hornpipe, and had been danced as such by Miss Catley, a popular actress of the latter part of the eighteenth century, upon the boards of a London theatre. Poor Mr. Rockstro, of Torquay, whose anti-Protestantism landed him into many serious errors, and, finally, into the Church of Rome, said that "no one who had seen a hornpipe danced could mistake the Terpsichorean animus" of this tune. Now, "Terpsichorean animus" is a good phrase, and we are grateful to Mr. Rockstro for it, but its employment in this connection was most unfortunate. For recent researches have proved that the melody of the tune was the production of Thomas Olivers, the friend of John Wesley, and the author of that magnificent hymn, "The God of Abraham praise." Indeed, upon its first publication, in 1765, the tune bore the name of "Olivers"; and it was not until its second appearance, in 1769, that it was entitled "Helmsley." This was some years before the production of Miss Catley's hornpipe; so that if the latter had anything to do with the tune, the hornpipe must have been derived from that tune, and not the tune from the hornpipe.

Now all this goes to show that the "association" theory is largely sentimental and, therefore, misleading, the best of musicians being occasionally in error as to what were, or were not, the original associations of a musical composition regarded as sacred or otherwise. We will, therefore, pass on to the *locality* theory, which declares that any music is sacred which has been, or is being, constantly rendered in religious places or connections. This theory, which would reduce sacred music to a matter of geography, is refuted by the fact that there is an enormous quantity of music now being performed in our churches which, however sacred in character, is decidedly secular as regards its origin. Such for instance, is Mendelssohn's Wedding March. This beautiful movement formed a part of the incidental music written to accompany a performance of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," which was given on the stage of the New Palace, Potsdam, on the 14th of October, 1843. The first to arrange it for the organ was

the late Mr. Samuel Reay, of Newark, England. He was at one time organist of the Parish Church, Tiverton, Devon, and in that church he played the March for the first time as an organ solo, at a wedding on June 2nd, 1847. But if, as we have already seen, Mendelssohn's March is of known theatrical origin, no amount of mere performance in ecclesiastical environments can alone cause it to be regarded as genuine sacred music. Of course it cannot be denied that Mendelssohn's March is much more sacred than, let us say, the Bridal Chorus from Wagner's *Lohengrin*, or sloppy shop ballads such as Teresa del Riego's "O promise me," and other similar effusions so often heard at hymenal functions, but comparative sacredness or secularity is not the point now under discussion. All we are contending for is that no mere question of locality can convert into genuine sacred music movements which are secular by previous associations or constructive design.

Then there are some otherwise well-informed people who consider oratorio music to be sacred because they imagine it has always been free from theatrical associations. But the early oratorios of the seventeenth century "included scenes, decorations, action, and even dancing on a regular stage." Handel's oratorios, it is true, were devoid of these accessories; but we must not forget that the majority of them were first presented to a London audience on the boards of Covent Garden Theatre. Indeed, this largely accounted for the serious exception taken by the evangelical party of the eighteenth century to oratorio music in general; and which led the celebrated John Newton, in his "Fifty Expository Discourses on the Series of Scriptural Passages which form the Subject of the Celebrated Oratorio of Handel," to charge the promoters of the Handel Festival of 1784, with "making the fundamental truths of Christianity the subject of a public amusement." Another remarkable fact in this connection is that Handel himself termed his *Messiah* a "sacred" oratorio, thereby implying that he did not consider his other oratorios as altogether suitable to religious places or for religious purposes or occasions.

It is also interesting to note that some of the movements in Handel's *Messiah* were adapted from earlier and, in some cases, secular works, by the composer himself. Thus the chorus, "For unto us," was largely indebted to some of Handel's earlier Italian duets; the beautiful solos, "He shall feed His flock," and "Come unto Me," are actually based upon the rhythm of a Siciliana, a dance of the old-time Sicilian peasantry; and while it is still questionable whether Handel did, or did not, propose to follow the Overture to *The Messiah* by a minuet, in accordance with the

orthodox procedure of his age in the matter of overture writing, there is a minuet in existence which claims to belong to the *Messiah* overture, and there can be but little doubt that Handel used it as a Coda to his Overture when he performed the latter as a separate movement or, as an organ solo. (See our article on The Minuet in Handel's *Messiah*, in *THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY*, January, 1919.) Now, if we accept the locality theory, the most frivolous operatic or dance music could be converted into sacred music by frequent performance in ecclesiastical environments, and by careful suppression of all information concerning the locality of its original production. Which is, really, too absurd an idea to be entertained for one moment. Sacred music must not and cannot be made a mere matter of geography.

The next answer to our question is much more popular than any we have as yet considered. It is to the effect that, as old Samuel Wesley, the son of Charles Wesley, the hymnodist, and the father of Dr. Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the celebrated English cathedral organist, once expressed it, sacred music is "certain musical sounds applied to *sacred words*." Sir Arthur Sullivan put the matter negatively, when he said that "apart from the words" there was "no such thing as sacred music." The popularity of this view is attested by the editor of "The New Music Review," who recently said, "Thousands accept music as sacred simply because words of a religious or pseudo-religious nature have been adapted to this or that tune which was originally and inherently secular." But like all popular things, the "sacred words" theory is superficial. It fails to realize that before we could accept it, we should have to decide what is meant by the expression "sacred words," an enquiry quite foreign to the scope of this paper. It also fails to realize that by its acceptance we should imply that instrumental music, which is never applied to mere words, must be "execrably unsacred." Whereas, as the late Dr. C. J. Frost remarks, "It is an absurd idea to think that only music which has been composed to sacred words is fit for use at Divine service. There are many movements of the classics so religious in their tone as to be far more eligible to come under the classification of sacred than any compositions which have been set to sacred words."

Further, the "sacred words" theory would permit of the introduction into public worship of the most grossly secular and even profane tunes, provided these happened to be furnished with some more or less appropriate religious rhymes. This, as we have already seen, is at once the peculiarity and the shame of the "English" Hymnal. And it is not by any means an original

proceeding, for it has already been done in recent times in much of the so-called music of the Salvation Army and other popular religious organizations. Then, as early as the year 1831, that distinguished Moravian musician, the Rev. Christian La Trobe, in his work on *The Music of the Church*, declared with more conviction than courtesy, that the melodies of "Rule Britannia," "Britons strike home," and "Robin Adair," had "worked their way into some Dissenting (!) places of worship." As regards "Rule Britannia," La Trobe's statement was perfectly true. As all our readers are probably aware, this fine tune was written by that great English melodist, Dr. Arne, as the basis of the finale of a *Masque*, entitled *Alfred*, which was composed to commemorate the accession of George I, and was first performed in August, 1740. The melody became popular almost at once, and its introduction into the church service was due to that erratic divine, the Rev. Rowland Hill, who included it in a collection of hymns and anthems known as "Surrey Chapel Music," from the place of worship at which it was used and in which Rowland Hill exercised his ministry. The work was edited on the musical side by Benjamin Jacob, then organist of Surrey Chapel, who was not only one of the finest organists of the latter part of the eighteenth century, but one of the first organists to play the music of Bach in Great Britain. In the *Surrey Chapel Music*, "Rule Britannia" was set to words which were written, for a meeting of the London Missionary Society in 1797, by Rowland Hill himself, and which ran thus:

When Jesus first at Heaven's command  
Descended from His azure throne,  
Angels, attendant, joined His praise.  
Who claimed the kingdom for His own.  
Hail, Immanuel! Immanuel we'll adore,  
And sound His fame from shore to shore.

Now, whatever may be thought of the quality of these words, provided we introduce into our worship no worse melodies than that to which the above lines were set, we shall not greatly err musically. But, as Mr. Cuthbert Hadden so ably expressed it, "Nothing will reconcile anyone having a claim to taste and refinement to those who can insult a sacred text with the tune of "Dem golden slippers," or unite the Name that is above every name with that of "Poor old Jeff."

Then again the "sacred words" theory is a veritable pitfall to those who possess no knowledge whatever of musical history, since such are not aware that many of the German chorals we admire so much, and sing so often, were, originally, set to secular

or amorous words, in an age when the line of demarcation between the style of music deemed "sacred" and that considered "secular" was not drawn with the precision of modern times. Thus the exquisite choral generally associated with the translation from Gerhardt commencing "O Sacred Head once wounded," was originally set to an old German love-song; while it has been stated, although not upon good authority, that the "Old Hundredth" was adapted from a popular air of the fifteenth century. Then there is the case of the tune known as "Innsbruck." This was written by Heinrich Isaac, who has been described as "Germany's first great composer," on "the occasion of his leaving Innsbruck in order to establish himself at the Court of Bavaria, probably about the year 1490." The words to this tune—words said to have been written by the Emperor Maximilian himself—ran thus, in English:

Innsbruck, I must forsake thee,  
And on my way betake me  
Into a distant land.

Later on this was "spiritualized" into

O world, I must forsake thee,  
And on my way betake me  
To mine eternal home.

The tune became one of the most popular of the earlier German chorals and, as harmonized by Bach himself, one of the most beautiful. Now, seeing that this tune and the other choral above mentioned have both lost their original associations and are indistinguishable in style, from the sacred music of the period in which they were written, it would be absurd to exclude them from our worship. Yet, if the supporters of the "sacred words" theory are consistent, they will have to place these tunes, and many others equally beautiful, upon a prescribed list, simply because they were not originally written to sacred words. The "sacred words" theory must, therefore, be discarded as being at one and the same time superficial, illogical, and unmusical.

But the recorded answers to the question asked, or the puzzle propounded in our title, are not yet exhausted. For the late Rev. E. Husband, of Folkestone, England, from whom we have already quoted, states that to a large number of people the sacredness or otherwise, of a piece of music is decided by the printed title. "If a march were called 'The May Day March,' " says he, "it would be secular; but if the same piece had its title altered to 'The Cathedral March,' then it would instantly become sacred."

This is, of course, forgetful of the fact that many pieces are published under, or have acquired in course of time, two or more titles. Thinking along these lines, Mr. Cuthbert Hadden says, "It is just as if the over-pious parent refused to allow his child to play with his wooden horse on Sunday, but allowed him to have his Noah's Ark, because Noah's Ark is mentioned in the Bible!" And there are people to be found who seriously believe that if a composition be called a "prayer" it must at once be regarded as sacred. Whereas, there are all kinds of worthless compositions bearing this title—a title generally given them by their composers or publishers with a view to the improvement of their saleable properties or prospects. Indeed, so numerous are these musical atrocities that we can offer up our petitions on almost any instrument one cares to name, from a pianoforte to a piccolo. And not only have we prayers on the pianoforte and the piccolo, but we have prayers from the opera also. Some of these, as Mr. Cuthbert Hadden wisely remarks, "may be quite as religious in tone as the most approved oratorio air; but, notwithstanding this, there is sufficient reason for not using them in the service of the sanctuary, in the fact that they must call up conflicting emotions in the minds of those who have been accustomed to hear them under very different conditions."

Moreover, there is a very great danger dogging the footsteps of those who would make sacred music a mere matter of title. This danger, as we have already stated, is that a great deal of good music, originally secular as regards associations and purpose, if not as regards character, has been removed from its primary environment, set to sacred words, and is now accepted as genuine sacred music. A case in point is furnished by the German chorals recently alluded to. Another one is supplied in the case of the Handelian songs known as "Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," and "Lord, remember David." As far as the titles are concerned these are surely sacred enough to satisfy the narrowest critic or, the meanest Christian. But both songs are operatic airs, adapted by Dr. Samuel Arnold, sometime organist of the Chapel Royal and of Westminster Abbey, towards the end of the eighteenth century. The first-named song is adapted from *Rodelinda*, an opera composed by Handel in 1725; the second, is taken from *Sosarme*, another Handelian opera, first published in 1732. Concerning this method of adaptation, a writer in an English paper of comparatively recent date observes: "If Handel writes a showy *bravura* air for a soloist in one of his earlier and well-nigh forgotten operas, that of course is secular, and its use in a Sunday concert is

to be frowned upon. . . . But if Handel chooses to lift the whole movement into one of his later oratorios, why, of course, the piece becomes sacred, and may be listened to with smug satisfaction on the Seventh day." Sir George Macfarren, however, defended this questionable practice on the ground that "Handel, like every other composer of his age, wrote in the same style, whether his subject was spiritual or temporal, modifying only the earnestness of his expression in consonance with the sentiment he embodied." On the other hand, there is a great deal of truth in Mr. Wiseman's opinion that "A principle of classification which accords a place in sacred repertoire to such a *tour de force* of barbaric defiance as Handel's "Honour and Arms" (because it occurs in an oratorio) and at the same time relegates to the secular, say, the *entr' acte* in Schubert's *Rosamunde*, on the ground that it is an excerpt from an opera, seems desperately in need of revision." After this our readers will be disposed to cry with Mercutio, "A plague o' both your houses!"

Dismissing the "printed title" theory as puerile, we have next to combat the idea that sacred music is a mere matter of *form*, that is to say, that all music in the form of hymn-tunes, chants, anthems, and other recognized forms of church music, is sacred. This answer to our question is purely arbitrary and partial, since its supporters can give no satisfactory reason for its selection. They condemn a sonata as being secular, but are not aware that some of their most favourite hymn-tunes are adapted from classical compositions in sonata-form. Indeed, there are some very beautiful examples of these adaptations, amongst which we could mention "Sardis," from Beethoven's Romance in G, Op. 40, for Violin and Orchestra; "Neapolis," from the slow movement of one of Haydn's Symphonies in A; "Rest," from Mendelssohn's well-known *Lied ohne Worte* in E, and many others too numerous to mention here. Besides, it must have occurred, at one time or another, to many of our readers, that there are passages of melody in compositions regarded as "sacred," which are absolutely identical with other passages occurring in compositions regarded as "secular." For instance, the initial notes of Mendelssohn's "O rest in the Lord" are identical with a fragment of the Scotch song, "Robin Adair"; Henry Smart's tune, "Gloria," has its first two lines similar as regards notes (although not as regards rhythm) with the first two lines of that old melody known in England as "The Vicar of Bray"; and the first line of Dr. Dykes' tune, "Vox Dilecti" to Dr. Bonar's hymn, "I heard the voice of Jesus say"—is strangely reminiscent of the quaint Scotch melody, "John

Anderson, my jo." As a matter of fact, the phrases here enumerated are the common property of all musicians and musical compositions, and to label a work or a melody "sacred" or "secular" merely on account of its containing one of these tags or *clichés*, would be to betray almost unpardonable musical ignorance. Then, as we have already seen, some hymn-tunes regarded as safely sacred are, in reality, dangerously secular, being adapted from operatic or other secular sources. Such are the tunes "Rousseau's Dream" and "Weber" previously mentioned, also the numerous arrangements of the Sextet from Donizetti's opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, at one time so absurdly popular in America, and other "profane babblings" mostly intended for Sunday School use. But if such hymn-tunes be sacred, then must the opera from which they are taken be sacred also. Which, again, is absurd. Wherefore, failing this conclusion, we should discard such tunes altogether, or plead guilty to being governed by what the late Mr. J. Allanson Picton once called "sacredness constituted by tradition, habit, and ignorant fear of sacerdotal sanctions."

Nor do we fare any better if we venture to assert that all music in anthem-form must be sacred, not only on account of its form, but because it is cast in a professedly sacred mould and, further, is sacred by locality, associations, and performance. For, according to Professor Lutkin, there can be no sacredness about

the cheap and showy anthem where the words are juggled around to fit the exigencies of an attractive tune, where words are repeated *ad nauseam* to fill out the symmetrical requirements of musical form, and where insincerity is evident as well as painful lack of appreciation of word and thought values. In this type of anthem, or musical setting, the music in itself may be well-made; but we sometimes go a step lower by accepting and exploiting the music of amateurs who possess all the faults catalogued above, plus an all but absolute ignorance of the laws and rules of musical composition.

Here we must leave the advocates of the "musical form" theory to deal with Prof. Lutkin's strong indictment as best they can. They will be well advised to leave it severely alone. It is absolutely unanswerable.

Meanwhile, we pass on to consider that very material answer to our question which would make sacred music a mere matter of *tempo*, by asserting that no music can be sacred unless it proceed at a low rate of speed. Yet, strange to say, this answer—the feeblest we have as yet considered—is actually one which has the support of not a few otherwise well-informed musicians. For instance, the late Mr. J. Spencer Curwen, the gifted son of the

founder of the Tonic Sol-Fa system, writing in "The Christian World" of August 20, 1896, remarks that "Mr. Eugene Tompkins, proprietor of the Boston theatre, has been fined 50 dollars for giving a concert on a Sunday evening, which did not consist entirely of sacred music. At the trial there was, of course, the usual badgering of witnesses as to what constituted sacred and secular music. Those called for the prosecution dwelt largely on the question of speed, and mentioned that one of the pieces was in quick 6/8 time. On the whole, this forms the best rough distinction between what we mean by sacred and secular." We beg to differ from our departed friend. For if sacred music be music proceeding at a slow tempo, what about the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*? No sane conductor would take this slowly. Yet we doubt very much whether any person would be considered *compos mentis* who would venture to suggest that this movement was not sacred music. It is as Mendelssohn once said to the conductor who objected to the rapid tempo he adopted for some of the choruses from Haydn's *Creation*, "The times are gone when people thought sacred music ought to be tiresome." Indeed, there is neither sanity nor sanctity in a drawl. The "tempo" theory is purely material.

Possibly most of our patient readers will feel relieved at hearing that we have but one more answer, to our somewhat vexed question, which we really consider worthy of serious attention. And, when we come to discuss this answer we venture to think that the majority of our readers will agree with us, that in this case the would-be authorities upon the matter of sacred music have, to use the language of Thomas Carlyle, changed their natural dimness into Egyptian dark. For, incredible as it may seem at first hearing, it is a fact that there are still to be found, even in this twentieth century, people so unscriptural in their ideas of church music as to maintain that sacred music is a matter of *performance*, and that to be suitable for religious purposes, places and occasions, it must be rendered only in accordance with certain prescribed or traditional methods. Thus, the older Scotch Presbyterians, the more narrow-minded of the Puritans, the majority of evangelical Christians in English-speaking countries prior to the last century, and all the Calvinistic churches of the Continent of Europe, regarded instrumental music as unsuitable for the purposes of worship, or, as the Rev. Andrew Fuller expressed it, "utterly unsuited to the genius of the Gospel dispensation." Then we have old John Calvin, who firmly believed that "ornamental music and even songs of four parts cannot fail greatly to displease

God." Calvin, in common with those otherwise excellent people who object to an orchestra in a church, who grumble at chanting, and who would silence even the most gifted vocal or instrumental soloist, especially the latter,—all these good folk, in fact, forget that orchestral accompaniments were originally of Divine institution, "the commandment of the Lord by His prophets" (I. Chron. xxiii, 5, and II. Chron. xxix, 25-30). Then, as to chanting and solo singing, every intelligent student of the Scriptures knows that both these methods of performance were common in the Jewish church and at the celebrations of the Jewish Passover. Indeed, the only record we have of Christ's active participation in music is to the effect that He chanted the Psalms and sang the *Amens* with which most of the chanted Psalms terminated. The "hymn" referred to by the first two evangelists as having been sung at the institution of the Lord's Supper was, as all Biblical students are aware, Psalms 115-118 chanted antiphonally, or responsively; it being probably that, as head of the household, our Lord sang the former half of each verse of these Psalms, the disciples responding with the other half. This, according to Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, was the custom of the Jewish church during the first century after Christ; while we have it upon the authority of that great musical historian, Sir John Hawkins, that "The music of the primitive church, though it consisted of psalms and hymns, yet was it performed in sundry different manners." These, Sir John goes on to show, included solo singing, antiphonal chanting, and performances by mixed choirs. And although hymn singing, as we understand it, was practically unknown in the early Christian church, the Scripture references being only to chants and responses, as Charles Kingsley once said, when speaking on St. Paul's reference to "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs": "I think the Apostle means not merely church music—for that he calls psalms and hymns—but songs which have a good and wholesome spirit in them." And if anyone be so foolish as to imagine, in these days of grace, that solos, duets, or any other type of concerted vocal music is unsuitable to religious places, purposes, and occasions, we wish them nothing worse than that they had been—minus the beating and the stocks—in the Philippian dungeon more than eighteen centuries ago, when "at midnight Paul and Silas sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them." For if this was not the singing of a duet, pray what was it? Seeing, therefore, that sacred music has been sung by the saints in all ages "in sundry different manners," it is clear that sacred music cannot be converted into secular by the manner in which it is accompanied

or performed. Even if these latter be ever so unsuitable to religious environment they can only mar the effect of the music, they cannot alter its character.

Attention has now been directed to all the answers to our selected question which can justly be considered worthy of serious consideration. Thus we have considered the "quality" theory and found it plausible, rather than scriptural; the "temperament" theory, and found it emotional; the "purpose" theory, and found it farcical; the "associations" theory, and found it sentimental; the "locality" theory, and found it geographical; the "sacred words" theory, and found it not only superficial but illogical and unmusical; the "printed title" theory, and found it puerile; the "musical form" theory, and found it partial; the "tempo" theory, and found it material; and the "performance" theory, and found it unscriptural. And now the time has fully come to proceed synthetically rather than analytically, to abandon destructive criticism for constructive; and, mindful of the fact that an iconoclast is not of necessity a "repairer of breaches," to set diligently to work in order to build up a comprehensive and impartial definition of what sacred music really is.

The first link to be forged in our chain of constructive criticism is the statement that sacred music is primarily a matter of quality. This view is so admirably stated by the Rev. J. B. James, in an early number of "The Musical Journal," that we need make no apology for again drawing water from the wells of pulpit eloquence. Says our clerical friend:

The ideal of sacred music is the perfection of art that will conduce to the highest spiritual result. Every true Christian must admit that it is our privilege and duty to offer nothing short of our best to the Lord of Nature, of Art, and of Morals. Ignorant people disparage learning, and base their reason upon the groundless assumption that God is more flattered by their ignorance than by other people's erudition. And some unmusical people argue upon the assumption that God is more pleased with poor music than with good, as though He were the Author of inferiority and inefficiency. Church music, from an artistic point of view, should be an education. The people of good ear and cultivated taste have a mission to fulfil in the matter of perfecting the music of the sanctuary.

In fine, as old William Byrd, perhaps the greatest composer of the Elizabethan age, says in his "Psalms, Sonets and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie," "The better the music is, the sweeter it is to honour and serve God therewith."

Then, while insisting upon sacred music being the best of its kind, we must not forget to add, "the best of its age," also. This

addition will prevent us from adopting the position of the psalmodic conservative, and imagining that there are no hymn-tunes worth the singing except those popular in the days of our great-grandfathers, and no anthems worthy of consideration unless dating from the eighteenth century. And, on the other hand, it will restrain us from characterizing as "secular," "ranting," or "debased floriated," the tunes of the type of our old friend "Helmsley." Further, it will prevent us from despising the older school of English church composers simply because their works are wanting in the harmonic and instrumental elaborations which adorn the pages of most modern anthems. We must not be so incongruous as to expect an eighteenth-century composer to speak to us in the idiom of the twentieth, any more than we imagine that Bacon will express himself in the terms, say, of John Stuart Mill, or that the styles of Milton and Tennyson will be identical. No definition of sacred music can be satisfactory unless it be broadly comprehensive. To quote once more from Mr. Wiseman: "The characteristic quality of sacred music is consonance with the thoughts and feelings which the religious man cultivates and his worship expresses. Music that stimulates or suggests such sentiments, or is in harmony with them, is sacred for the age and among the people for which it has that effect." Had a former head of the Roman church only realized this, his *Moto proprio* would never have been issued.

The second link in our chain of constructive criticism is the assertion that music, in order to be considered sacred, must not only be the best of its kind and of its particular age, but it must be characterized by dignity, breadth, and solemnity. As Professor Hadow says, "It is not contended that all music for the church should be directly devotional in character. The Bible itself is not confined to the direct expression of religious feeling. It has room for the Song of Solomon, the story of Samson, and the dramatic histories of Esther and Elijah. But we may demand that music which is to befit a sacred building should be marked by a dignity and reticence which we do not require elsewhere." To say conclusively that constitutes dignity and solemnity in music would be a most difficult task. But as the Scriptures speak of "a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen," so every true musician and practical composer knows that there is possible an invention of melody and combination of harmony producing the effect of dignity and solemnity which is none the less real, because not easily explicable, even to individuals possessing sound theoretical knowledge. An English bishop once remarked

that the note C would sound the same in the church as in the concert room; but he overlooked the fact that it is the combination of notes and the manner of their performance that counts in this connection. As Mr. Cuthbert Hadden says, "We feel instinctively that, apart from the associations of the words, the music of Handel's *Messiah* is suited to a cathedral and that the music of *Tannhäuser* is not. And the feeling is perfectly lawful and right." After all, perhaps the best test as to the sacredness or otherwise of music is the extent to which it conforms to the description of Addison, who maintained that "Music, when applied to religious worship, raises noble hints in the minds of the hearers and fills them with great conceptions. It strengthens devotion and advances praise into rapture." A thing, be it noted, which undignified and frivolous music never could do.

At the same time the fact should be emphasized that sacred music, in order to be solemn and dignified, need not of necessity be elaborate.

He that of greatest works is finisher  
Oft does them by the weakest minister.

So some of our finest hymn-tunes consist largely of common chords; some of the most beautiful of the melodies of the great masters are founded upon simple scale passages; while the storehouse of church music contains exhaustless quantities of music of conspicuous merit which anyone possessing average musical taste could appreciate, and which anyone possessing average musical ability could easily perform. A musical composition is not secular because it is slender in construction and modest in its employment of technical material.

Then, while remembering that difficulty is not synonymous with dignity, we must be careful not to confuse dignity with *tempo*, and imagine that nothing can be solemn unless taken *adagio*. Nor, on the other hand, should we mistake sloppy sentiment for deep feeling and expression; nor regard as bold and inspiring a movement which a cultured musician would consider blatant and extremely vulgar. And although the creation of misconceptions as to what constitutes dignity and solemnity in music can be avoided only by a study of the theory and practice of musical composition so thorough as to be almost impossible to those outside the profession, yet the continuance of these misconceptions may be removed by a reference to, and a loyal dependence upon, the united opinions and practices of those composers and writers who have devoted their abilities to the production of the highest

forms of sacred music. A good Christian may be a very bad composer; but no composer of music really sacred can fail to possess some more or less exalted idea of the dignified and impressive in musical art.

The next step to be taken in the synthetical part of our argument is to add—to the definition of sacred music already given—the statement that it must be free from all secular associations. We have so fully discussed and so completely discarded the "association" theory that we are not likely to fall into the fearful and wonderful error committed by the editor of a London religious weekly, who asserted that the very snuffers of the Tabernacle were converted into sacred snuffers on account of their association with Divine service. Surely a pair of snuffers, sacred or otherwise, was sadly needed just then to snuff the candle of that editor's intelligence! For no degree of sacredness in the matter of associations can be allowed to compensate for a lack of sacredness in the construction or constitution of the thing offered. The late Dr. Sawyer, of Brighton, England, once said, "A piece of music in dance rhythm, if it does not recall to your mind the ballroom, is as sacred as an Adagio in  $2/4$  time." But the worthy doctor forgot that dance music which did not recall the ballroom would not be true or typical dance music at all. The chief essential in a march is that it shall set us a-marching; in a waltz, that it shall set us a-waltzing. But, surely, we have yet to learn that we need to be set a-marching or a-waltzing in our churches, although some denominations of professing Christians have started the former in their so-called processional and recessional hymns. Also, we are given to understand that in some American churches, marching forms a regular and recognized portion of a church wedding ceremony; and great care is taken, and elaborate instructions given concerning this, to the participants in the most important parts of the proceedings. Perhaps, the waltzing is to follow. We shall see.

But it may be asked, why should the performance of abstract music (such as fugues, sonatas, symphonies, chamber music, etc.) be considered suitable for religious places and purposes seeing that it is constantly being performed in concert rooms and other places of entertainment? To this it may be replied that the associations of the concert room are mostly artistic, not theatrical, and not merely emotional or frivolous. Besides, much sacred music is often performed in the concert room and does not become thereby and therefore, secular any more than unredeemably secular music would become sacred by being performed in religious environments.

Also, as Professor Peterson puts it, "The great mass of instrumental music has no element in it of sacred or secular." In the words of the editor of "The New Music Review": "There are fugues of Bach that are prayers. There is orchestral and chamber music that might justly be called religious music; for it takes one from the world and its pomps and vanities, and leads the hearer to the consideration of the great problems and mysteries; it stimulates spiritually; it uplifts."

We have now but one more link to forge in our chain of constructive criticism. And that is to add to the definition already obtained the proviso that, if vocal, music to be considered suitable for religious places or purposes must be set to sacred words. As to what constitutes sacred words we must again decline to be drawn. Old John Calvin once said, "One must be careful to see that the words to which music is to be set be not alone harmless, but also holy." This is a high standard. Whether all the words in our modern hymnals attain thereto we hesitate to determine. There is no doubt about some of them being harmless. They are too feeble to be otherwise. But whether they be holy is quite another question, as holiness is not at all synonymous with feebleness.

In this connection it is interesting to notice how really good music has survived the words or, in some cases, the rubbish to which it was originally set. Take, for instance, the paraphrases of Sternhold and Hopkins which, for all practical purposes, are as extinct as the dodo. Yet the tunes originally set to these paraphrases, such as Winchester Old, York, Windsor, and many others, are still with us. As Dr. C. W. Pearce quaintly puts it: "It says a good deal for native English musical art that our oldest psalm-tunes have survived, in most cases, the 'dry psalter' of Messrs. Tate and Brady. The work of organists has been handed down to posterity; while the work of divines has become obsolete. The reason is a simple one: the music was devotional,—the poetry was not so."

And now, having completed the forging of our chain of constructive criticism, let us survey our handiwork. Viewed as a whole, our definition reads thus: Sacred music is music suitable for religious places, purposes, and occasions; and all good music is sacred provided it be the best of its kind and age, characterized by solemnity, free from secular associations, and, if vocal, wedded to sacred words. Music conformable to this broad and comprehensive definition will fulfil all the requirements of Archdeacon Gardner, who says that not only should music really sacred "bring to us a

sense of pure, ineffable joy," but, "in varied ways it may be an inexhaustible delight and inspiration. It can speak in the heavenly notes of those beings who have never known sin and sorrow, or it can express the agonizing travail of mortality. Sometimes, for an instant, it can remove the mists which hide for us the oneness and the peace that lie at the centre of existence. Often it brings visions of love and gentleness and the forgetting of self that are the essence of Christian faith and practice." This is a noble tribute to the power of sacred music, and we quote it with the deepest possible pleasure, because from the pen of a writer from whose opinions on church and organ music we, as a rule, emphatically dissent.

And now, looking over the paths of destructive and constructive criticism along which we have travelled, it may be that some will say that they "have not passed this way heretofore." Others, perhaps, finding our conclusions to be in direct opposition to many of the accepted theories of the day, will regard us as "a setter forth of strange gods." But so complete, so satisfactory, and so unanswerable do we believe our completed definition to be, that we have nothing to add thereto and nothing to substract therefrom. Indeed, there is little more to be said except to show, by proceeding synoptically, or by pursuing a short course of comprehensive criticism, what general musical forms and certain particular compositions are entitled to the designation "sacred."

The first step to be taken on this course, is to state that the musical forms included in the category of "sacred music" would comprise hymn-tunes, chants, responses, anthems (verse, *i. e.*, solo, or otherwise), vocal solos, and instrumental music of any kind that can be proved to be of the highest technical character, dignified, and free from all present or known secular words or associations. Thus amongst hymn-tunes we should regard as justly entitled to the prefix "sacred" the best of the ancient and modern English psalm-tunes, of every period since the Reformation, remembering that the old "Church Tunes" of the Reformation or the Elizabethan age, are not only finer than the German chorals of that age, but were written by Protestant musicians, probably by some of the church musicians who fled to the Continent of Europe during the Marian persecution; also that they were primarily designed for church use, and are absolutely free from all secular associations. But while welcoming the German chorals and really good adaptations from sources not suggesting improper or disturbing associations, many of the hymn-tunes founded on so-called plain-song melodies should be avoided in the

worship of the Protestant church as being incongruous; and, because sacred music should be dignified, we should exclude from our hymn-tune list, tunes written and harmonised in the style of a sacred part-song. Enough has been said already to condemn the wretched and flimsy effusions of evangelistic writers. These, with their "seeming plagiarism and too great indebtedness," should be regarded as "good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." A hard fate, but one thoroughly deserved.

Writing concerning the service of the Protestant churches, we may regard as sacred all good Anglican chants, provided such are neither too florid nor in any way effeminate; remembering again that the Anglican chant, the anthem, and the glee, are the three musical forms peculiar to the English school of music. As to plain-song, its performance in the worship-music of the Protestant churches is (as already claimed) incongruous; and since, according to M. Gevaert, the eminent plain-song historian, these chants are probably adaptations from popular Pagan music, we should need more assurance as to their origin before giving them unquestioned admittance to our selected list. The late Rev. E. Husband once remarked, "The winter of Gregorianism is past; the time of the singing of Handel and Mendelssohn is come." The world of music in general, and of sacred music in particular, would be all the better if this statement were absolutely true.

With so many good anthems by ancient and modern composers, we should do well to exclude from our churches the weak strains of some of the earlier American writers, as these works were written for musical beginners, for babes and not for strong men. Short shrift should also be given to those effusions of blatant march rhythms or sentimental successions of commonplaces with accompaniments for pianoforte or organ (generally suitable for neither) which masquerade under the name of anthems. They represent a type, but a type which no self-respecting choir or congregation should tolerate. We have no right to insult our congregations either by the singing, or asking them to join in, the singing, of rubbish. No, not even if they ask for it. Congregations and music committees are sometimes like individuals in that they gain immeasurably by the losing of their prayers.

With reference to the organ voluntary, we may regard as suitable for performance in religious connections all the organ works of Bach and Mendelssohn, and all the best compositions of the modern American, English, French and German schools, together with arrangements of suitable abstract instrumental music

and sacred choral music. But every effort should be made to discountenance the performance, in religious places, of organ music founded upon dance rhythms or vulgar march strains, and all arrangements suggesting secular associations. Such music, so far as religious environments are concerned, is only fit for the waste-paper basket, concerning which we do not know of any particularly sacred associations.

In orchestral, chamber, and abstract instrumental music, let us by all means regard as "sacred" the symphonies, sonatas, and concerted music of all the best writers of the classical, romantic, or modern schools, always provided that the selected movements are characterized by breadth and solemnity. And with reference to oratorios, cantatas, and larger choral works, while many of these (such as Handel's *Samson*, Hadyn's *Seasons*, etc.) contain many numbers of a more or less secular character, these works are seldom performed in their entirety, and selections suitable for religious places, purposes and occasions can quite easily be made. Finally, with the immense amount of vocal music which is to be found set to sacred words, there is no excuse for any vocalist selecting a solo, or any choirmaster a chorus, which, on account of its character or quality, could not be regarded as legitimate sacred music. Vocalists especially should steer clear of the sloppy trash exemplified in so many of the so-called "sacred songs," regarding such as belonging to that class of music, "falsely so called," of which Sir John Stainer once said "no self-respecting musician should touch, not even with a pair of tongs." Or, as our abandoned son, Mr. Purcell James Mansfield, F. R. C. O., of Glasgow, prefers to put it, "not even with a barge-pole." At the same time we are under no necessity whatever of selecting music above our attainments. Sacred music, as we have already said, is not necessarily elaborate. Very often it is quite simple. But it is never common. It was the common people who heard the Master gladly, not the people of common minds—a distinction and a difference. Common music can never fulfil the mission assigned to it by Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach, namely, that "One of the noblest aims of music consists in advancing religion and in *edifying* and *elevating* the human soul." The italics are our own.

We have now reached "the conclusion of the whole matter," so far as criticism destructive, constructive or comprehensive is concerned. But we ought not to conclude without congratulating ourselves that in claiming as "sacred" all good music possessing dignity and solemnity, and in rejecting only that which disqualifies itself on account of its material or verbal associations, we are not

only in full sympathy with the trend of the best modern thought, but with the highest wisdom of all the ages, the comprehensive declaration of Scripture that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and that "every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights." And this discovery reveals to our astonished gaze a vista of almost unspeakable possibilities. For if we believe that "the earth is the Lord's," we are compelled to believe in a day when, in the final, complete, and overwhelming victory of all that is good in man, in art, and in literature, this truth will be literally and abundantly demonstrated. Then the reminders of the village pothouse, the rubbish of the revue, and the reminiscences of the opera and the ball-room, will alike be swept out of our churches, and no plea of associations or popularity will save them from their well-deserved doom. Our religious festivals will not be marred by what an old English writer once termed, "trebles wondrous lewd and basses worse"; the profanities perpetrated in some of our mission and Sunday School hymnals, and perhaps the hymnals themselves, will be cast out as salt that has lost its savor; while not only "bowls and bridles" but music and musical instruments also shall alike be "holiness unto the Lord." As the late Dr. Matheson, the author of the hymn "O Love that wilt not let me go," once said, "In the good time coming, art will be deemed a part of religion. The musicians will sit down amongst the saints, because all our springs are religious springs. No music, no painting, no sculpture, no poetry, will any more be deemed secular. They will all be recognized as the inspiration of God." As to the exact moment of the arrival of that "good time" there has been "no open vision"; of the precise manner of its advent we know but in part; concerning its effect we prophesy but in part. But we know, we are persuaded, nay—rather—we are always confident, that that which is perfect *will* come, and then, "that which is in part shall be done away."

## DOMENICO SCARLATTI

By G. FRANCESCO MALIPIERO

**P**IERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA! Claudio Monteverdi! Excepting the illiterate (it is true this title becomes the great majority), who can be ignorant of the names of these two great Italian musicians? To know, however, the names of Pierluigi da Palestrina and Claudio Monteverdi does not imply familiarity with their works.

The musicologists (not to be confounded with the musicophiles) have fathomed the life, death and miracles of every musician, including those minor ones who, when once more put into circulation, enjoy a brief quarter of an hour of ephemeral fame, while at the same time, no doubt, yielding some material advantage to their discoverers. Unquestionably, the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina and of Claudio Monteverdi among Italian geniuses merit a very special place in the history of music; and in this case "history" means "life." And were it possible, nowadays, to execute choral music without much difficulty, and if among the various nations there still existed the desire to exalt ideals by mass-singing, the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina would become the keystone of popular art.

The profound refinement and the deep power of the Monteverdian expression, too, are dispersed in the music of his dramas, among which only the "Orfeo" to-day might stand on its own feet without being subjected to extended amputation. His choral works belong in the category of those exceptional works which cannot easily conquer the great public, because they were created in a world of their own, accessible only to the very few, though for all that by no means deserted. Yet it is evident that the revelation of the Palestrinian and Monteverdian works might give rise to various problems of a practical and material order, not easily overcome except by the help of chimerical innovations. And Domenico Scarlatti? Why is he not known and appreciated fully and justly? Particularly in view of the pianoforte, an instrument of music so popular that it is easily transformed into an instrument of torture for humanity, because it may be found and heard everywhere. There hardly exists a house that

does not harbor at least one piano. What, then, is the reason that the works of Domenico Scarlatti, almost exclusively written for harpsichord (*clavicembalo*) and consequently easily adapted to the pianoforte, are played far less than those of Chopin or the German classics? Is it because Scarlatti is more difficult to play? Without a doubt Domenico Scarlatti's compositions abound in perilous jumps not calculated to attract those performers who consider a false note a world catastrophe, and the nervous apprehension resulting from such a preoccupation is of the same nature as the emotion induced by a target-shooting competition. One must admit that this inconvenience for the player does exist, and the reason for it is that the keyboard of the harpsichord (*clavicembalo*) greatly facilitated the crossing-over of the arms, the jumps that reach beyond the octave, and all those peculiarities that in the final analysis reflect the special characteristics of Domenico Scarlatti's art. These characteristics of his, however, are numerous and varied, and I think one might relinquish the noted perilous jumps, thus making the pianistic execution easier, without compromising the work in itself, nor committing unpardonable acts of vandalism.

Little more need be said, in all probability, to specify the importance of the greatest of Italian *clavicembalists*, or to voice the regrets of one of his most faithful disciples for the lack of recognition his art receives. I think, however, that it is possible to demonstrate the value of the Scarlattian muse by bringing to light all the jewelled wealth of music that abound in his every page.

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The works for harpsichord (*calvicembalo*) by Domenico Scarlatti cannot help but fill one with amazement if approached from a point of view seldom enough taken into consideration, and one which, unquestionably, is self-evident. Johann Sebastian Bach and François Couperin were contemporaries of Domenico Scarlatti, and it is all important to note the fact that these three authors<sup>1</sup> represented the quintessence of 18th century music, whether under the head of harmony or of form; each one, however, preserves his own special and singular personality, one never to be confounded with another. It might be worth while, to-day, to

<sup>1</sup>It is a well-known fact that Bach made a profound study of Italian music, more especially the music of Frescobaldi and Vivaldi, besides that of the Frenchman Couperin.

give thought to the relationship of these unrelated musicians; it might be profitable, for those who dare to proclaim themselves innovators, and almost insist on a patent, directly they have managed to lay hands on some harmonic or rhythmic combination likely to provoke an illusion of novelty, to take cognizance of these masters.

Domenico Scarlatti is a precursor in the fullest sense of the word; all his means of expression spring from virgin soil; they emanate solely from his mind. All the mannerisms, all the cadenze, all that became a habit in the music of the Italian 18th century and ended by so powerfully individualizing it, appear for the first time with Domenico Scarlatti, and are his own absolute invention. Owing, perhaps, only to an odd coincidence rather than to a direct influence, there are passages in his works that recall 19th century composers. For example, the Chopin reminiscence in the following:



As for the cadenzas, the themes, the modulations which foretell the art of Beethoven, they are to be found dispersed in the majority of the Scarlatti Sonatas.

The influence of Domenico Scarlatti on the whole instrumental music of his time has never been sufficiently acknowledged by the high priests and pontiffs of criticism, and without wishing to insinuate that Beethoven proceeded to collect the leavings of the great Italian clavicembalist it is, nevertheless, only an act of justice to acknowledge the spiritual bond existing between these two musicians, representatives of two opposed tendencies of musical expression. There are, here and there in the Scarlatti

Sonatas, crescendos and chromatic ascents that greatly resemble the crescendos and chromatic passages in Beethoven:<sup>1</sup>



And themes of true Beethovenian savour abound:



<sup>1</sup>The above and subsequent examples are taken from the 500 Sonatas (with a Supplement of 45 Sonatas) of Domenico Scarlatti, published by Ricordi, Milan, and edited and revised by Alessandro Longo. The great advantage of this edition lies in its faithful reproduction of the original; where the revisor has deemed himself face to face with an error of script, he has placed for reference in the margin the exact text of the MSS. The great harmonic freedom of Domenico Scarlatti at times makes one think that the revisor, allowing himself to be misled by 19th century laws of harmony, failed to recognize that freedom. For example:



Here, certainly, Domenico Scarlatti has left the D of the first chord in spite of the clash with the C#, and has done so because it pleases him. Further proof of his intention may be found in another Sonata, where the revisor again felt bound to carry out a correction of the same nature:



In each case it is a question of the chord of the 11th, which Domenico Scarlatti's successors have considered it their bounden duty to forbid (unless presented without the Third) in order to preserve humanity from a dangerous dissonance.

An additional advantage of this edition is that it allows the original text to be reconstructed, even when the revisor has been assailed by doubts, for nothing has been arbitrarily suppressed and altered.

In one of the Sonatas<sup>1</sup> there may be seen, quite openly in evidence, the theme of the Scherzo of the VIIth Symphony, and it is developed with an imitation that unmistakably recalls the development of the German symphonist:



Without citing further examples (and actually there would be a great many<sup>2</sup>) I think the fact of the influence exercised by Domenico Scarlatti, for more than a century, over musicians of varied nationalities, may be clearly established.

When Theodor de Wyzewa edited and republished the "20 Sonata e Caprici di Muzio Clementi"<sup>3</sup> he endeavored in his Preface, to prove the great influence Clementi exerted on Beethoven, and he forgot that the former derives from Domenico Scarlatti, and that every claim to paternity really falls to Scarlatti's share. It cannot be denied, nevertheless, since Clementi was a contemporary of Beethoven, that the affinity between them is closer and more marked; all the more so because in Clementi there are melodic and harmonic processes that afterwards became characteristic of Beethoven, and conduced to the defining of his musical personality.

A good example is the theme of the second movement of the Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 5, composed in Paris, in 1780:



<sup>1</sup>Volume IV, No. 188. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

<sup>2</sup>Other interesting examples may be found in: Volume VII, Sonata No. 320, measures 14-20 and measures 46-52; Volume VIII, Sonata No. 393, measures 33-34; Sonata No. 395; measures 57-65. Supplementary Volume: the whole of Sonata No. 29 and the first 17 measures of Sonata No. 45. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

<sup>3</sup>Edition Maurice Senart, Paris.

It might absolutely be and pass for a Beethoven theme; while in the finale of the Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 47, composed in Vienna in 1787, there is a true Scarlattian theme:



It requires but a little good-will, and one may trace many points of resemblance between Domenico Scarlatti and Johann Sebastian Bach; but this is due in the main to the fact that the latter was so utterly saturated with Italian music that he may have inherited his ways from some common ancestor of Domenico Scarlatti.

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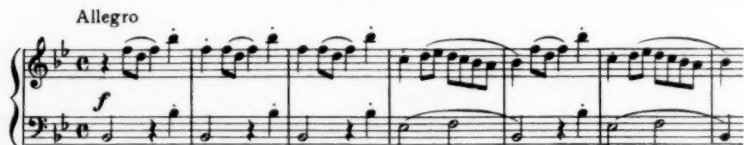
It is quite certain that the rhythmic and harmonic turbulence and vivacity of Domenico Scarlatti are not to be met with in any other musician, whether in or out of Italy. The Scarlattian themes are compelling because their originality is obtained by a few strokes, simple but decisive, and drawn by a master's hand. Their rhythm and their design are of the rarest quality, and might almost seem uniform, were it not for the power of the style which is ever predominant; and so they are comparable to a great bunch of variegated flowers all gathered from the same garden plot.

Domenico Scarlatti prefers vivacious rhythms to the syrupy sweetness of melody painted and bedecked. It is to be noted that out of 545 Sonatas only 83 have *andante* or *adagio* movements, and that even in these Scarlatti's merry good humour manages to make itself at home and peep out.

With simple cadenzas, in which the chords of the dominant and tonic alternate with forcible insistence, he succeeds in creating a sense of unusual originality that defies all efforts of bare analysis. Among the multitude of Sonatas there is one<sup>1</sup> in which the rhythm reaches the very paroxysm of joyfulness, and in the end gaining the ascendancy over mere matter, transcends it and transforms it into one unique expression of frenetic motion. The theme is one

<sup>1</sup>Supplementary Volume, No. 39. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

of maddened trepidation, though harmonically quite simple (tonic, under dominant, dominant, tonic).



The whole sonata bears the imprint of the Scarlattian genius which, had Scarlatti belonged to the romantic school, might have been termed the genius of perpetual motion. Though Domenico Scarlatti's music is always filled with a lively merriment that few clouds ever darken, yet when clouds do at times appear, they are speedily transformed into refreshing April showers. It seems strange that no one has thought of Dante's words in the Third Canto of the "Inferno," where he describes the "cowards circling round a banner that whirling rapidly obliges them to run without ceasing, as a punishment for their past poltroonery." One can attribute the above quality to Domenico Scarlatti's art, thus endowing it with intentions of which the author never dreamt, but which to-day might serve the purpose of intensifying the fantastic imaginings of a listener for whom, unconsciously and unknowingly, Music is the art of the indefinite:

And I, who looked again, beheld a banner  
Which whirling round, ran on so rapidly,  
That of all pause it seemed to me indignant;  
And after it, there came so long a train  
Of people, that I ne'er would have believed  
That ever Death so many had undone.

. . . . .

These miscreants who never were alive  
Were naked, and were stung exceedingly  
By gadflies and by hornets that were there.<sup>1</sup>

A modern poet, a faithful lover of music, has proved how deeply he has penetrated into the art of Domenico Scarlatti when he wrote: "the vigour, the daring, the gaiety, the frankness, the volubility, the voluptuousness of that music" (a sonata of Scarlatti) "renewed and refreshed in me, as if by a miracle, the sense of life. Each sonata, with its one unique theme, conducted above a movement divided in two parts seemed always to be the brief line of an ever varied perfection and by its unexpected modulations

<sup>1</sup>"Inferno," Canto II. Translated by Longfellow.

it varied the force of the most limpid element."<sup>1</sup> It is indeed, with one unique theme, *never developed* and free of cerebral vagaries in order to preclude reiteration, that Domenico Scarlatti never repeats himself; and this because the "force of the most limpid element" manifests itself in him so inexhaustibly. An academic analysis of his sonatas would yield little except from the point of view of form; the variety is obtained by the "ever varied perfection" and by the "unexpected modulation." There are some sonatas where the First Theme is never heard of again, and nevertheless the line is compactly maintained for the greater unity of style; and it is only to the force of his style that one must attribute all that which, escaping bare dissection, satisfies one so fully, holding one's attention, and keeping one's interest on the alert.

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With the same habitual indifference with which one expresses such platitudes as: the best sparkling wines come from France, or, Spain is the land of the *toreador*, the legend has been evolved that Italy manufactures melody, and of all foolish legends this is the most foolish. Harmony saw its birth in Italy; without harmony there is no music, and when Italy drew her inspiration from the true sources of Latin sensibility, it was harmony that generated melodic expression.

Frescobaldi was one of the first to enrich music with many charming melodies, besides those chromatic ones that at times he rather tortuously evolved, for example this one in the "Partite sopra la follia":



Gesualdo da Venosa was a creator of true *atonal* polyphony and he presents one of the most singular phenomena of harmonic hypersensitiveness. He can neither be classified nor confounded with any other musician of his epoch. The madrigal "Tu m'uccidi, o crudele" would suffice to stupefy with astonishment the historian bent on assigning a determined position to the

<sup>1</sup>Gabriele d'Annunzio—*La Leda Senza Cigno*. Vol. I, page 29-30.

Prince of Venosa in the evolution of music; to-day he still disconcerts those who persist in seeing in the harmonic theories of the 19th century a progress of the science of Harmony.

*Sostenuto*

The musical score is written for piano and consists of six systems of staves. The first system is marked *Sostenuto* and *f*. The music is in 4/4 time and features complex harmonic structures with many accidentals. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various note values, and dynamic markings. The score is a single melodic line with a rich harmonic accompaniment.



Claudio Monteverdi also, in order to intensify his dramatic and lyrical expression, drew from harmony his most valuable force, as the most striking parts of his "Orfeo" can attest; specially the second act of this masterpiece of his. It is in fact, in the second act that he surpasses himself, that he casts into the shade his own wonderful lament of "Orfeo" with the Messenger's Tale; it is impossible to awaken in the heart of the listener such "pity and terror" except by the five chords with which he ends the Messenger's Tale, and they are impressively "veristic," so potently do they underline the sense of discouragement expressed by the words:



Even in the domain of harmony, Domenico Scarlatti was worthy of his musical predecessors. He was able (as has been already mentioned) while stimulating the interest by his rhythms, to obtain by the simplest chords of the diatonic scale the most vivacious and original musical expressions, and no less amazing are his harmonic finds.<sup>1</sup> It is no exaggeration to affirm that he was the last heir of that great Italian school issuing from Palestrina, Gesualdo da Venosa, Girolamo Frescobaldi and Claudio Monteverdi, which has lost itself in the drama in music. The depth and the richness of the Scarlattian harmonies have often disconcerted the musicians of the 19th century, specially those who undertook the republication of his works. It would be an interesting achievement to collect and reproduce all his important

<sup>1</sup>"Scarlatti was the first who dared to give way to fancy in his compositions by breaking through the contracted prohibitions of rules drawn from full compositions produced in the infancy of the art, and which seemed calculated merely to keep it still in that state. Before his time, the eye was made the sovereign judge of music, but Scarlatti swore allegiance only to the ear."—Charles Burney. *The Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces*, 1775.

harmonic combinations; in the greater part of the sonatas there are incessant surprises and finds, most frequently caused by the admirable modulations of the passages from the dominant to the tonic, touching lightly on distant tonalities and delaying over pedals of a vague but persistent rhythm, as for example:<sup>1</sup>



In one of the sonatas<sup>2</sup> the interest of the middle part is kept sustained by a wondrous modulation from E to F, passing by D-minor and E-minor. In another<sup>3</sup> under the pedal F# (1-8) and E (3-8), which lasts for 10 bars, several chords pass, modulated in the relative tonalities (from A-major there is a return to A-major by way of B-minor, C-minor, E-minor and F-minor), which arouses a deep sense of nostalgia. Out of 545 Sonatas there are at least 400 rich in harmonic inventions that have a great significance, rather because of what they express than because of their originality in themselves. The material with which the work of art is fashioned, counts but little and cannot influence it: it disappears, assimilated by the thought it embodies.

<sup>1</sup>Volume III, No. 124. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

<sup>2</sup>Volume I, No. 6. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

<sup>3</sup>Volume V, No. 206. Edition Ricordi, Milan.

It is certainly not analysis that will raise the name of Domenico Scarlatti to deserved heights, but the recognition of his great importance as the "founder" of a style that became the style of his century, and one with which he anticipated every one and everything. From time to time in his sonatas there appear elements of an absolutely orchestral character: themes for horn, for trumpet, passages made for wood-instruments, trills for strings.

Andante comodo



Allegretto



Allegrissimo



Allegro



Everywhere the power of pure inventiveness predominates, every word of his is the revelation of a new language.

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Of his life, his biographers (and they are not so many) have said enough. We know he began his career in Rome, that he lived in London, in Portugal and in Spain, and that he died in Naples, his native town. Whoever observes his life by means of

his works must, however, remain impressed by the influence popular Spanish music exerted on him. There are themes in his works which seem to be written by modern Spanish musicians of our own day.



Naturally, far more than the Spaniard of the habanera or the malagueña, which make their transient apparitions, it is the Neapolitan who predominates with the typical rhythms of the Italians born at the foot of Vesuvius. Domenico Scarlatti, in fact, is a worthy son of Parthenope; mindful of Vesuvius, he loves to play with light and fire, but only for the greater joy of humanity.

*Translated by A. W.)*

## MASTERPIECES, CONTEMPORARY OPINIONS, AND IMMORTALITY

By R. W. S. MENDEL

**W**HY does any one compose music? This question may be called either unutterably stupid or so profound as to be insoluble. It may be the senseless interrogation of a person who pours empty words out of his lips without expecting an intelligent reply, if indeed he is waiting for any answer at all. On the other hand, it may represent the thoughtful enquiry of one who is honestly seeking for the psychological explanation of musical productivity.

After all, there must be some reason which prompts the creator of works of art; for even if he himself deny the existence of any, this is merely because he is unconscious or but partially conscious, of the nature of his motive. He may write music, frankly in order to make money, or to win a bet with some friend who has declared him incapable of doing so, or just to please himself, or because he can't help it. Possibly the two last-mentioned explanations are identical. In any case, they are likely to be the most interesting. The chances are, that the music which a man cannot help writing will be that which pleases him best: moreover, that which he himself likes best is likely to be that which the world will enjoy the most. It is quite true that a composer is sometimes not the most reliable judge of his own work. But there is a difference between judging and liking. A composer may consider that a work of his own shows various technical or æsthetic flaws and yet he may love it in his heart; and the critics and the public may not agree with his fault-finding and may on the other hand share in his affection for the work in question. Conversely, they may see faults where he detects none, in a work of which both he and they are fond. Usually we shall find, I think, that what the composer has loved, his hearers love, too—simply because the more spontaneous a work is and the more it springs from a man's heart, the more readily will it appeal to the musical public.

From this point of view, it matters little whether a man writes to please himself or to please others. The two things are, in the long run, identical. For he knows that if he writes what he likes—if he succeeds in expressing what he wants or feels impelled

to express—his creation is more likely to find favour with other people than if his heart is not in his work. A composer may be as much a recluse as you like. The mere fact that he is composing at all carries with it the necessary implication that he is writing for a public.

A man may write what is known as a pot-boiler. Its popularity may last only for a few years, or even a few months. In that case, it will have appealed to a far smaller number of human beings than another production which may have been appreciated by a much more limited public in its own day, but has delighted succeeding generations as well. In this sense, the C Minor Symphony and the "Tannhäuser" overture are far more popular—in that they have won a much larger total number of appreciators—than "Alexander's Ragtime Band," or "Tea for Two." Again, as contrasted with Mendelssohn, Sullivan, or Puccini, all of whom were successful in their own day and continue to be popular, we may mention Bach, César Franck, and Hugo Wolf, as three instances of composers whose music has not been enjoyed so much in their own times as it has been by later generations.

The vast majority of twentieth century critics and music-lovers may concur in saying that such and such compositions of the past are beautiful works of art. How can we account for the fact that some of these have apparently been appreciated by their contemporaries, while others have had to wait for posterity for their appeal to make itself felt?

Bach is the most conspicuous example of a master whose creative genius was not clearly realized until years after his death, and the fact that this happened to the work of a man whom many of the leading authorities regard as the greatest composer in the world's history must give us pause. Even if we were to take the view that for the most part great composers are fully recognized as such by their own generation, it would be asking a good deal of us to make Bach an exception to the rule. If someone were to come before us and proclaim that English poetic genius has not run in the direction of drama, the mere remembrance of a fellow called William Shakespeare would, perhaps, be enough to discredit the notion.

It is true that hardly any of Bach's compositions were published in his lifetime: but this was the result of a lack of appreciation rather than the cause of it. Most of his sacred choral compositions were performed in his own church at least, and it is reasonable to infer that the listeners did not understand their beauty and greatness sufficiently to create any demand for their

continued repetition or publication. Even if we grant that Bach utilized the musical forms of a much older Germany, and that we can hardly recognize in Bach's Leipzig the gay city of Goethe's description, the reason why the creative work of this "most universal of musicians" (as he has been called), was utterly ignored by practically all his contemporaries and why he was regarded rather as a great organist than as a master composer, is surely because he was intellectually and temperamentally, so far as his musical art was concerned, far in advance of his time.

Bach is the extreme case of a great composer whose works were not duly valued in his lifetime. Perhaps the nearest approach to him in this respect was César Franck: the latter was something of a recluse, and it is not altogether surprising that one who took so little trouble to make himself known to the public should have remained in comparative obscurity while he was alive. Franck was, however, surrounded by an enthusiastic, though small, body of disciples, whose belief in him probably went far to secure that public acknowledgment of his genius which only came to full fruition after his death, if indeed it may be said to have done so even at this day. His greatness as a composer was not, even in his lifetime, so completely overlooked as was that of Bach.

But what of most of the other great creative musicians in history? Can it be maintained that they were not fully valued by the men of their own epoch? And if it can, what is the true inference to be drawn from the fact?

It has long been the practice for certain biographers to contend that great composers have been misunderstood in their own day. A wealth of evidence can, indeed, be adduced to show, for instance, that in the cases of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber, Schumann, and Wagner, their contemporaries have blundered hopelessly in failing to appreciate their music, while it was left for posterity to appraise it at its true worth. On the other hand, unimpeachable testimony is also available to prove that the works of these self-same masters were frequently lauded in their lifetime and that derogatory comments, when made, were often fully justified or at any rate easily excused for one reason or another.

If, however we look at the facts fairly, we shall, I think, arrive at the conclusion that while most of the great masters have indeed met with a good deal of praise in their lifetime and were, in fact, recognized as being distinguished musicians, their mastery was often not fully acknowledged by their contemporaries, and that the true position of a genius in the history of the art seldom

can, in the nature of things, be realized properly by the men of his own day.

Those who live at the same time as a composer can hardly form so sound an estimate of him as their children's children are able to do. Even if we allow that a great man's own generation, through being more alive to his faults, may sometimes be able to judge more clearly of his worth than the people of a later age, who occasionally have a tendency to look at him through the rose-coloured spectacles of distant years, yet for the most part only posterity is able to see a past era from far enough away to get the right perspective. When you are too close to the mountain you cannot apprehend its due proportions: certain of its features are exaggerated, while others may be scarcely visible. It is only when you are some way off and, best of all, when there is a valley or a plain between you and it, that you realize its height, its grandeur, its beauty—and its defects too—in their true light. When you look at the great mountain from afar, you are also able to fit the rest of the landscape into its proper place, and you now see (what you had failed to notice before), that certain other hills which, when you were close to them, you had believed to be mighty mountains, are only inconsiderable heights as compared with the vast summits which are now unfolded before your gaze. For it must not be forgotten that the defect of contemporary criticism is not only that it frequently underpraises greatness, but also that it overpraises mediocrity. The onslaughts upon Beethoven by such a man as Weber (who might have been expected to know better), and by other well-known musicians of the time; the underestimating of Schumann and Wagner by Lobe and other critics and music-lovers of the day; these and other similar cases do not represent the only kind of mistake which contemporary opinion has made. We have to remember also that Telemann was regarded in his own age as being a bigger man than Bach; that Spontini was at one time mentioned in the same breath as Mozart; that Spohr was regarded as a great genius by the men of his own epoch: that there were many who placed Buononcini's operas on a par with those of Handel, or Piccini on the same footing as Gluck. We can hardly feel inclined to rely very much upon the verdicts given in a composer's own lifetime when we find that they have so strong a tendency to place genius and talent on the same plane. After all, most things are relative in this world, and it might reasonably be said that a criticism which seeks by disparaging comments to reduce the great man to the level of the fellow of secondary worth is no more fallacious than

that which tries to raise the latter by false adulation to the heights properly occupied only by the genius.

It must not be thought that I am suggesting that a great composer's contemporaries are incapable of recognizing his greatness. On the contrary, musical history teaches us quite the opposite: but the truth would seem to be that a man's own generation cannot, in the nature of things, value him at his proper worth: it is more prone to exaggerate or underestimate his importance, as the case may be, than are the music-lovers of a later age.

Assuming that this is so, what happens, as a rule, to the appreciation of musical masterpieces after the composer's death? When we speak of the verdict of posterity, we are using a very wide term. Quite apart from the times in which a creative musician has lived, subsequent generations cannot all be lumped together. That which is attractive to one among succeeding ages does not necessarily appeal with the same force, or at all, to others. Are we right in attributing immortality even to those works which have been acclaimed as masterpieces?

No one can, of course, prophesy what will be the ultimate fate of any of man's creations. When we speak of the probability of a musical work proving immortal, we mean simply that so far as anything human is certain, it is likely to endure through a larger number of epochs than we can calculate, by reason of its having qualities which we feel do not depend upon purely local or temporary fashions: it may be serious or light-hearted, profound or superficial, emotional or intellectual; but whatever it be, it possesses a character which is attractive in some way, though necessarily in varying degrees, to an endless series of successive generations.

The best way in which we can form an opinion whether a work, hitherto regarded as a classic, is likely to remain immortal, is by observing what has happened to it in the past and what is happening to it to-day. Some lovers of old masterpieces have feared that the interest in these works is of quite limited duration, and that they will each in turn drop out of favour eventually and give place to new things.

It is not easy to understand why this alarm should be felt for the future of great musical creations. Is there any fundamental reason why the case of music should be so different from that of the other arts? If the appeal of the epic poems of Homer, the tragedies and comedies of the great Athenian dramatists, the sculpture and architecture of the age of Pericles, the poetry of Dante, the plays of Shakespeare, the great cathedrals of France,

Italy, and England, has survived through the ages, why should the masterpieces of music alone be short-lived?

A modern novel is enjoyed by the man who loves Thackeray and Fielding (and Chaucer and Aristophanes too, for that matter!). It is significant that the most ardent supporters of modern tendencies in music are amongst those who are enthusiastic in their enjoyment of the works of the old Tudor composers. It still remains to be proved that there is anything in the material of the musical art which tends to make musical productions possess only a passing interest.

I cannot think of a single great musician whose best works show any sign of dropping out of favour altogether. What does happen, however, is that the work of each composer appeals in different degrees to different generations. It is evident, for instance, that the productions of William Byrd, who was held in high esteem by his contemporaries, were allowed to fall into neglect because they made but a slight appeal to the next succeeding epoch. Now that they have been rescued from oblivion, they afford great delight to the men and women of the early twentieth century: it is quite likely that a later generation, while recognizing their value to some extent, may not be strongly attracted by them; and that at a still later date they will again be enjoyed as much as they are to-day. So it goes on. The music of William Byrd is probably immortal, but it is not reasonable to suppose that it will be loved equally by all future ages.

It can hardly be maintained that the wave of enthusiasm for so much of the old Tudor music, which is now spreading from this country to the continent of Europe and also to America, is an ephemeral fashion arising in England from a quaint kind of sense of duty to celebrate tercentenaries. For not all the masters of that epoch whose music is now so frequently performed have been the subject of tercentennial celebrations, and those who have been have successfully survived them. The appeal which the best music of that period makes to modern listeners is for the most part a perfectly genuine one.

Something of the same sort has happened to Bach as befell William Byrd. A long period of neglect was followed by an attitude of respect on the part of the music lovers of the early nineteenth century, of admiration in the later part of that century, of genuine love and enthusiasm at the present time: Bach concerts draw crowded audiences as few other programmes can, clubs and societies are formed for the rendering of his works, cathedrals are packed for the performance of his settings of the Passion, and the

B minor Mass is acclaimed as the greatest musical masterpiece of all time. All this may not last. But the immortality of Bach is as certain as anything human can be.

The music of Handel, who flourished two hundred years ago, is as popular as it ever was—in certain respects even more than it was in the nineteenth century—because we are now witnessing a revived interest in his instrumental works and a perhaps still more unexpected resuscitation of his operas (in Germany). It only remains for the perennial freshness of "Messiah" to be accompanied by a demand for his other and unduly neglected oratorios.

The present generation inclines toward a special devotion to the later part of the eighteenth century. Sir Henry Wood has presented delighted audiences at the Promenade and Symphony concerts with some most refreshing performances of a number of symphonies of Haydn which for some reason had become forgotten, but which practically everyone who heard them joined in proclaiming to be as fresh as when the ink was wet upon the page.

The extreme modernists are among the most zealous enthusiasts for the creations of Mozart. In the sound patterns which they find in his works they claim to trace a prototype of their own unemotional strains; in the reticence and simplicity of means which he employed they discover a model for their own economy of resources. The appeal of Mozart is exemplified again by the crowded audiences for "Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "The Magic Flute," at the "Old Vic." Theatre; in the successful performances of the last-named opera and of "Il Seraglio" by the British National Opera Company; in the revivals of two of the immortal series in last year's international season at Covent Garden; in the fact that Mozart is given an honoured and a popular place in programme after programme of chamber-music, and that the famous Lener Quartet of Budapest saw fit to devote two whole evenings to his works in their series of concerts held in London during the autumn of 1925; in the continued attraction exercised by the Mozart festivals of Munich and Salzburg.

It is fair to say that the works of the 18th century are being played and sung and enjoyed more by the present generation than they were by its fathers and grandfathers. But this does not in the least imply that the masterpieces of this epoch are more likely to be immortal than the best work of Mendelssohn, for instance. It means simply that they have a special fascination for the music-lovers of to-day. In the case of Mendelssohn, it is true that a reaction against the tremendous vogue for his music set in some

years ago: but now we are witnessing a reaction against this reaction, which finds a counterpart in the modern attitude towards Tennyson's poetry. Our age is fully alive to the freshness and charm, the cunning workmanship, the delicacy and polish, of this great master, and the tendency to decry his music some little while ago, is yet another instance of the different ways and degrees in which different ages respond to the art of each immortal composer.

We have witnessed, too, a similar, and perfectly natural decline and revival of the popularity of Beethoven. The later nineteenth century indulged in a thoughtless worship of this great genius. A revolt set in, and a few miserable creatures even sought to belittle his claim to greatness: most of them, probably, were humbugs trying to attract attention to themselves, and in no way represented the opinions of the vast majority of music-lovers, young or old. It was felt, perhaps, by some, that Beethoven fell between two stools—the pure absolutism of Haydn and Mozart on the one hand, and the rich romanticism of Schumann, Chopin and Wagner on the other. Nevertheless, out of this doubt and conflict there has arisen a more critical, but (I venture to think) a truer appreciation of the great master than the unquestioning adoration of our grandfathers and grandmothers. It is admitted that Beethoven, like Homer, does nod sometimes, but the enthusiasm for his genuine masterpieces is as great as ever.

So must it, surely, always be. Each generation must forge anew its sword of acknowledgment of the world's musical masterpieces. Each of these has its exits and entrances, but because it is a work of genius it survives these countless vicissitudes in the long march of time.

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